This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Gellert
AN

THE

LIFE

OF

PROFESSOR GELLERT.

THE

LIFE

OF

PROFESSOR GELLERT;

WITH A

COURSE OF MORAL LESSONS,

DELIVERED BY HIM

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF LEIPSICK;

TAKEN FROM A FRENCH TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL GERMAN:

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By Mrs DOUGLAS,

OF

EDNAM HOUSE.

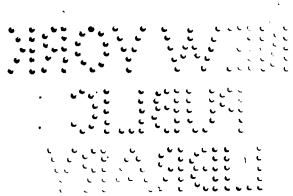
VOL. III.

KELSO:

PRINTED BY ALEX. RALLANTYNE,

FOR J. HATCHARD, PICCADILLY, LONDON; AND MANNERS AND MILLER, EDINBURGH.

1805.



FIFTEENTH LESSON.

CONTINUATION OF THE DUTIES WHICH HAVE INTERNAL ADVANTAGES FOR THEIR OBJECT, RELATIVELY TO THE STATE OF SOCIETY IN WHICH WE LIVE, IN THE FIRST PLACE; AND SECONDLY, OF THOSE DUTIES WHICH RELATE TO RICHES, HONOURS, AND AUTHORITY.

In that ſtate of ſociety in which we live, riches, honours, and authority, are the means of ſupplying our indiſpenſable neceſſities, of procuring us the innocent conveniences of life, or of contributing to the utility and happineſs of others. To deſire them in this view, to ſeek by all lawful means, by our application, by our merit, to obtain them, and labour to procure an encreaſe of them, by our attention and fidelity, is what duty calls upon us to do. It is not, however, poſſible for us to determine exactly, by general rules, how far this duty ex-

tends; for example, to what degree we may be lawfully ambitious of obtaining the goods of fortune. It is certain, that the care we ought to take of our fortune, ſhould be in proportion to our wants, regulated by a deſire to make a beneficial uſe of it, and not to let it be injurious to any other natural inclination or moral diſpoſition; in a word, not to allow it to be in contradiction with any other of our duties. Who would not conſider as a precept of reaſon, and, conſequently, as a law to which we ought to conform, that of ſeeking and ſecuring to ourſelves the poſſeſſion of riches and honours, which we can acquire by our merit, and without deviating from the path preſcribed to us by our calling; having in view, by ſo doing, to better our condition and that of others, and to do important ſervices to our families, our friends, and the public? Whenever, therefore, we neglect the care of our fortune from a natural indifference, from caprice, from levity, from lazineſs, from ſenſuality, too ſtrong an attachment to our eaſe, or from prejudice, this negligence cannot be more laudable than the cauſes from whence it ſprings—it is vicious. When we poſſeſs fortune, be it little or much, not to uſe it for our own advantage, and that of others, from avidity and an unwillingneſs to part with it, is avarice. Thus the poor man as well as the rich may be avaricious: it is enough if he wiſhes to keep and increaſe his little

fortune, not as a means of providing for his indiſpenſable neceſſities, but becauſe he loves money, and that his chief object is to amaſs it. On the other hand, with the few pence he poſſeſſes, he would be as prodigal as the rich man with all his treaſures, if thoſe were ſpent without reflection, without neceſſity, and merely from a love of pleaſure.

Whoever confines himſelf to a narrow fortune from indolence, and becauſe it is ſufficient for his neceſſities, though he might acquire a larger by a more ſerious and exact application to the duties of his ſtation, is culpable in as much as he deprives himſelf of the means of being more uſeful by becoming more rich. He, on the other hand, who riſks his health and his reputation to enrich himſelf is too much attached to riches. A man may undertake the moſt praiſe worthy and moſt uſeful labours, he may ſtrive to improve and to combine all the faculties of his mind, he may produce the moſt excellent works relative to arts and ſciences, but if he does all this wholly with a view of getting money, he is not diſtinguiſhed, in the eye of reaſon, from the avaricious merchant, who traverſes the two Indies through a thouſand dangers, to bring from thence an increaſe of treaſure. That economy muſt be badly regulated, which engages a man ſo entirely in the purſuit of intereſt, as to allow him no leiſure to perform the duties of friend, huſband, and father

of a family. It is being avaricious and very inattentive to his mental faculties, to dedicate all his time and care to his bodily neceſſities, ſo as to diſqualify himſelf from labouring to improve his underſtanding and his heart. To injure our health by exceſs of application to gain wealth and ſhare it with others, is to fail in our duty under a pretence of performing it. To imagine, that becauſe we are rich we are diſpenſed from all occupations, is to believe that we are only bound to be uſeful to others to preſerve ourſelves from want.

Our riches, whether of our own acquiring, or coming to us from other ſources, are gifts of Providence, as are all our other advantages, and the duty of making a good uſe of them, is one of the moſt important and the moſt difficult. Riches, as I have already ſaid, furniſh the means of attaining excellent ends, and not to employ them in that view, is to wrong ourſelves and others, whether we ſquander them, or manage them with a ſordid parſimony.

The manner in which we uſe our riches, has a great influence on our moral character, and on every part of our conduct. Whoever makes a bad uſe of his fortune, makes alſo a bad uſe of his time, and of his mental and bodily faculties. When vanity, pride, caprice, exceſs of delicacy, are our chief directors in the uſe we make of riches, theſe diſpoſitions ſoon get the maſtery over all our other ac-

tions. Our hearts muſt neceſſarily be corrupted by the abuſe of riches. Too great an attachment to them is a kind of idolatry; our hearts contract low ſentiments, become hardened and leſs ſuſceptible of compaſſion and humanity. Moreover, an ill regulated expence muſt neceſſarily proceed from the gratification of bad inclinations, or muſt give birth to them, and ſerve to flatter our paſſions. To keep a ſumptuous table, to be magnificent in our dreſs, equipages and houſes, to procure to ourſelves at great expence all poſſible conveniences and recreations, is to nouriſh our delicacy, our pride, our ſenſuality, and our indolence. A fortune thus ſpent, is not only loſt, but degrades the man who thus miſpends it, by drawing him into many follies and weakneſſes to which it excites him.

The utility of riches is not confined to our own wants, it extends to thoſe of others. Avarice is cruelty towards the neceſſitous, and ſo is prodigality. If reaſon and duty require us to do all the good our means will permit, it is alſo conformable to reaſon that we ſhould ſuppreſs in ourſelves all immoderate deſire of wealth, avoid all ſuperfluous and inconſiderate expence, and ſpare no pains in managing what we poſſeſs properly; it is a duty to be humane, benevolent and ready to aſſiſt others; and reaſon tells us that whatever we can do without, and whatever we ſquander away on uſeleſs of-

tentations, in expenſive diverſions, inſtead of ſupplying the wants of others, and furniſhing clothes and food to thoſe who are in need of them, is a theft committed againſt the poor. As telling the truth ſometimes does not conſtitute a man of veracity, ſo neither are we good managers of our fortune becauſe we now and then make a good uſe of it. This practice ſhould extend to every circumſtance of our lives, and, as well as all our other virtues, become habitual to us; and ſince it is Providence who at all times furniſhes us with neceſſaries or ſuperfluities, we are alſo in conſcience obliged to uſe our utmoſt endeavour to apply them to the propereſt and moſt advantageous purpoſes.

Next to application in our callings, the beſt mode of ſecuring ourſelves from want and of bettering our fortune is to ſave. This preſerves the opulent man from inconſiderately ſquandering his riches, and often ſupplies the place of wealth to the poor. "Saving is the moſt ample revenue,"* ſays Cicero; and without having further recourſe to the authority of the Roman conſul, I add that it is frequently a preſervation againſt avarice, in as much as it teaches us the art of being content with little, and makes us diſtinguiſh wiſely between what is neceſſary and what is ſuperfluous. Without ſaving no monarch is ſufficiently rich, and with it the indigent

* Maximum vectigal Cic. parad vi.

man becomes his own benefactor. It contributes to contentment and moderation, from whence, in truth, it originates, when it is of ſuch a nature as to be juſtly called a virtue. It not only moderates and regulates the expence we are obliged to be at for our food, our clothes, our houſe, and to procure ourſelves ſome recreation; but it teaches us alſo to manage with prudence, and preſerve longer than we ſhould otherwiſe do, thoſe things which we have in uſe. Many people complain of not having what is neceſſary to their condition; but were they to retrench what they ſpend unneceſſarily, in following every faſhion, in habits of luxury, in providing themſelves with every poſſible convenience, and in ſatiſfying their nicety of palate, they would find they had a ſufficiency; and thouſands of others, who think they only poſſeſs what is abſolutely neceſſary, would have a ſurplus, by means of which they might exerciſe their generoſity towards others, and be diſtinguiſhed for acts of benevolence. Pliny, the younger, who loved to give, and that in the moſt generous manner, informs us of the ſource of his benefactions. 'What my revenue does not allow 'me to do, I find the power of doing by means of 'ſaving and frugality; this is the ſource from whence 'I draw my liberalities.'* The example of this great

* Quod ceſſat ex reditu, frugalitate ſuppletur, ex qua velut e fonte liberalitas noſtra decurrit. Plin.

ſtateſman proves, that in the moſt exalted condition we need not bluſh at practiſing an economy which even adds luſtre to greatneſs. We may do very happily without many things, and one whoſe deſires are few amaſſes wealth.

Silveſter is not ſatisfied with his fortune. He labours hard to ſupport his houſe, and nevertheleſs he complains of not having wherewithall to ſupply his expences. Though he makes a conſiderable profit he is always behind hand. What can be the cauſe of this? Perhaps Silveſter himſelf. Let him reflect on his own expences and on thoſe of his wife. Let him deduct what it coſts him for faſhionable whims, from what is required by neceſſity and propriety. His ſituation does not require him to wear ſuits of velvet. There then is what would free him from a conſiderable expence, beſides ſomewhat more which his fine dreſs occaſions on certain ſolemnities. He is a man of merit, why does he think of attracting notice by his dreſs? A wiſe man will not eſteem him the more, on the contrary, he will have a worſe opinion of him, when he knows that he ſpends more than a reaſonable man ought to do. The entertainments he gives coſt him a hundred a year, let him for the future confine them to half that ſum, or let him reſolve to invite none but friends who will be content with one diſh and his ſociety; in this he will find a great ſaving. Fifty

pound more is diſſipated he knows not how, in uſeleſs trifles which he is tempted to purchaſe. Let him learn to œconomiſe, and let both himſelf and his wife impreſs this maxim ſtrongly on their minds, that a good manager never buys what he does not want. Let him content himſelf with cheaper apartments, and let him only ſave on occaſions where he may do it with propriety, and he will find he has enough and perhaps more. It is not ſo much our wants as our inſatiable deſires which make our lives painful and neceſſitous.

When we ſeek honours and authority, to make others feel the weight of them, we act from a ſpirit of domineering, and this is tyranny. To aſpire after diſtinctions of which we are ambitious, as being a flattering prerogative, is pride. Duty conſiſts in never ſeeking theſe advantages by improper means, and in labouring to become worthy of them; or if we derive them from our birth and ſituation, we ſhould value and ſeek to maintain them merely as the means of our own ſecurity, of procuring to ourſelves a rational liberty, and of putting it in our power to do more important ſervices to others.

To ſeek to better our condition, to ſupply our wants, and even to procure to ourſelves an allowable ſhare of the conveniences of life, is therefore an innocent deſire, founded on our natural propenſity to purſue happineſs; if added to this we have in

view the advantage of others, this desire becomes laudable; and above all, when we propose to ourselves to obey God and reason, it deserves to be called a virtuous disposition. On the contrary, it is an effect of shameful and irregular passion, when the desire of riches and authority is not confined within the just limits prescribed to it by reason. To be ambitious of them, to love them, to acquire them on their own account, and thus to convert into an end that which by its nature is only means, is the basest of avarice, and the height of pride. But though it is a lesser degree of folly, yet it is contrary to reason, to desire, to seek, or to possess riches and dignities, merely as the means of gratifying our sensuality, our vanity, and an imagination which feasts itself on chimeras. The extent of fortune we endeavour to obtain, will in this case be regulated by our desires and imaginations; which having themselves no bounds will not allow us to set any to our pursuit of these advantages.

The surest way, then, of attaining riches and authority, is that which is opened to us by our talents and application, our good faith and prudence, our perseverance, œconomy, and the art of pleasing in society.

This is the honourable road which leads to fame and fortune; and even were it not to conduct us thither, it is the only one which it becomes us to

follow; independently of ſucceſs, to purſue this road is in itſelf a reward. All other modes of becoming rich are oblique, mean and diſhonourable. What labour and trouble does it coſt to amaſs wealth! Would I by artifice endeavour to catch ſome inheritance, or conſult intereſt more than reaſon in marrying a woman of fortune? Would I cringe ſlaviſhly to the great, to make a fortune more rapidly, or, following the example of Eraſtus, perjure myſelf, betray the ſtate, the rights of my ward, of God, and religion?

Prudence requires that, in employing our care and capacity for our own advantage, we ſhould have regard to the circumſtances of the times, the place, the country in which we live, to the favourable occaſions which offer themſelves to ſupply others with what they want, by our vigilant activity, and to derive from thence a profit equally lawful and conſiderable; that prudence, without the aſſiſtance of cunning and validity, will render us ingenius in making diſcoveries, and engaging in undertakings, and as bold and as prompt in the execution of them. If by following theſe rules, we do not acquire riches, we cannot, however, fail of being virtuous men, who muſt at all events gain enough for our own ſupport, and in a thouſand ways be uſeful to others, though not by our opulence.

Suppoſe even that with all our aſſiduity to fulfil

the duties of our calling, we ſhould remain poor, and that though poſſeſſing talents, we ſhould be long unſucceſsful, or, which ſeldom happens, never obtain any employment, we ought then to think that Providence has ſo ordered it, that it is a diſpenſation to which we muſt ſubmit, and that to ſupport our lot with patience, is a virtue. We may, at leaſt, promiſe ourſelves from the humanity of our fellow creatures, and ſtill more from the divine goodneſs, that by aſſiduous labour we ſhall obtain food and clothing, and that in times of ſickneſs and ſcarcity, we ſhall meet with charitable aſſiſtance. "Let us never forget that he that is ſlothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter." * Let us not confound the want into which we are plunged by our own fault, with virtuous poverty; and a vain deſire of riches, with the allowable wiſh of ſupplying our neceſſities.

The ſon of Sirach acknowledges juſtice, or the uprightneſs of virtue, as the ſource of glory and happineſs. The paſſage is too fine not to be inſerted. "With the bread of underſtanding," ſays he, "ſhall ſhe feed him, and give him the water of wiſdom to drink; he ſhall be ſtayed upon her, and ſhall not be moved, and ſhall rely upon her, and ſhall not be confounded; ſhe ſhall exalt him above his neighbours, and in the midſt of the congregation ſhall

* Prov. xviii. 9. † Eccleſiaſticus, chap. xv. 3. 8.

ſhe open his mouth. He ſhall find glory and a crown of gladneſs, and ſhe ſhall cauſe him to inherit an everlaſting name. But fooliſh men ſhall not attain unto her, and ſinners ſhall not ſee her. For ſhe is far from pride, and men that are liars cannot remember her."

After all, and it is a very conſoling reflection, that however deſirable honours and riches may be, neither a high reputation or a conſiderable fortune, is abſolutely eſſential to our tranquillity. The beſt reputation is that of having done our duty, and being in poſſeſſion of the teſtimony of a good conſcience before God, and the affection of men of worth and of a virtuous friend; this is a reputation entirely depending on ourſelves. All other kinds of reputation, whether reſulting from great talents and the moſt memorable actions, do not properly intereſt us, but in as much as they are united to that reputation which is attached to the worthy diſpoſitions of the heart. Without them reputation may give us celebrity and procure us diſtinctions, but cannot make us wiſer or better. If, therefore, nature has not endowed us with great talents, why ſhould we be ambitious of arrogating to ourſelves the reputation of them? Do we pretend to impoſe on ourſelves and others, and to ſubject ourſelves to the terrible embarraſſment of maintaining a poſſeſſion, of which even the lawful proprietors may be ſo eaſily

deprived, and which it muſt be much more difficult for an uſurper to aſſure himſelf of, even for a few moments? You have received but one talent, content yourſelf with the reputation of having carefully uſed it to the beſt advantage. This is honourable in the ſight of God, angels, and men. Do you poſſeſs a variety of conſiderable talents? So much the better. But they are not entruſted to you to procure for yourſelf a great name, but that you might direct them to the common good, and to the practice of important duties. Make, then, this uſe of them, without being anxious whether they always procure you the approbation of the public; that of your own conſcience ought to ſatisfy you. Merit always attracts the regard of men of worth; can it want any other praiſe? Yet it is not uncommon for perſons of the greateſt merit to be overlooked, and to occupy the hindmoſt ranks in ſociety; frequently, inſtead of public applauſe, it hears only the voice of ſlander and envy. Our true greatneſs of mind in this caſe conſiſts, in elevating us above humiliation and contempt, and in keeping us ſuch as we are, even ſhould the whole world judge us improperly. Compoſe your minds, eſtimable young men, in regard to the reputation and employments you may hope for in future; continue to purſue the path of duty and true merit, and to advance in the carreer of ſcience and good morals. Our lot is regu-

dated by Providence on the beſt plan, though frequently not on that we propoſe to ourſelves. I acknowledge and adore the particular diſpenſations of Providence in what regards myſelf. Never had I in view the ſituation in which I now find myſelf, and the concurrence of many circumſtances unforeſeen by me, was neceſſary to place me in it. Whenever, therefore, I reflect on the paſt, and that I conſider my faculties of body and mind, I find myſelf, thanks to the Almighty, and without any effort of my own, placed preciſely in that ſituation wherein, according to my natural diſpoſition and the feeble conſtitution of my body, I can beſt make myſelf uſeful, however little value may attach to what I am able to do. Our lot is not always decided at the moment we would wiſh; but let us take patience, the moment will come; perhaps our lot is painful, let us take patience, it will become more favourable. How many people have been relieved from an abject ſtate, ſooner than they could hope, and from the indigence under which they groaned, have arrived at a ſtate of opulence by means unknown to them. Man, it is ſaid, is the artificer of his own fortune; it is a falſe maxim if not admitted with certain reſtrictions. The God of heaven and earth, is the only ſupreme diſpoſer of our deſtinies; and our duty is to concur with his views, by our labour, ſubmiſſion, humility, and confidence, without

permitting ourſelves to form anxious wiſhes concerning our eſtabliſhment and our fortunes, which would be offenſive to that Providence who is ever attentive to our neceſſities. He beſt knows what theſe neceſſities are, and has better intentions towards us, than we have towards ourſelves. "Seek ye firſt, the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you."* I know reputation, my dear friends, and its little ſolidity. It does not ſatisfy the deſires of the heart. Our thirſt after it is appeaſed with difficulty, and becomes more and more ardent. If we ſucceed in acquiring a name, it is a difficult burthen to carry, and an obſcure life is more conformable to nature.

Happy is the man whoſe propitious lot withdraws him from a high reputation and a great fortune; who looks down on what the world calls elevation, and who without being enſlaved by what is called buſineſs, can without noiſe conſecrate the faculties of his body and mind to the practice of virtue! I know riches, not that I poſſeſs them, but I know them by the uſe others make of them. They are ſeldom a real good, they are much oftener a trouble; and it is more eaſy to do without, than to enjoy, them.

I repeat it, there is nothing in the deſtiny of man, of however ſmall importance it may be, which does

* Math. vi. 33.

not reſult from the government direction and permiſſion of God; and the plan he follows, however little it may accord with our deſires, will ever be the beſt for us, and for the general good.

Think, therefore, young people, only of acquiring real merit by uſing all your endeavours to attain it with humility and circumſpection. "Truſt in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own underſtanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths."*

* Proverb, iii. 5. 6.

SIXTEENTH LESSON.

ON THE DUTIES WHICH RELATE TO MENTAL ADVANTAGES, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES.

WHETHER we conſider the nature and diſtinction of our natural faculties, or the utility and ſatisfaction attached to the well regulated uſe of theſe faculties, every thing recalls to us the obligation we are under to exerciſe and improve them.

Our reaſon is an ineſtimable preſent to us from the author of our being. It teaches us to know a God, creator, legiſlator, and ſovereign diſpoſer of the univerſe; to know this world which is his work, man deſtined to inhabit the earth, and we ourſelves, who by the aſſiſtance of reaſon, are capable of diſtinguiſhing truth from error, and good from evil. Reaſon inſtructs us by means of experience, how far the objects around us may contribute to our happineſs or miſery. By its light, we diſcover what paſſes in our inmoſt ſoul, its moſt ſecret views, wiſhes, and incli-

nations; the relation our actions may have to the end we ought to propoſe to ourſelves, their certain or probable conſequences, for the preſent or in future. It eſpecially manifeſts to us in the contemplation of nature, in the order, the magnificence, and the ends we diſcover in it, the wiſdom, the power, and the goodneſs of the author of every thing that exiſts; in our own conſciences, and in the difference which an intimate conviction forces us to acknowledge between vice and virtue, between what is juſt and what is unjuſt, we trace the holineſs and juſtice of God.

The clearneſs of this light encreaſes in the ſoul; its ſphere of activity becomes more extended, according to the attentive and circumſpect uſe we make of it conformably to its deſtination; and it weakens by want of uſe, and becomes darkened by being abuſed. We ought not to forget, that it is not without pains, aſſiduity, the help of inſtruction, and an attentive and daily application, that this clear light is encreaſed. The mind acquires ſtrength by exerciſe, the frequent uſe of its faculties extends the bounds of its knowledge, and gives it more power over the heart and the inclinations. On the contrary, negligence, the abuſe of the powers of our underſtanding, give birth as in an ill governed ſtate, to miſunderſtandings, oppoſition, and revolt. Error and illuſion, then, uſurp that place which of right

belongs to juſt and true ideas. Ill founded opinions give riſe to irregular deſires, they make us attach a value to the objects of our affections which does not belong to them, and excite impetuous paſſions which are a torment to our own hearts, and to all thoſe with whom we are connected. One ſufficiently miſchievous effect of theſe arbitrary opinions is, that they do not allow us to purſue one conſtant and uniform tenour of conduct; falſe opinions cannot but plunge us into many fooliſh and vicious extravagancies. And what, I pray you, is the extravagance into which we can fall, which is injurious only to ourſelves, and does not in ſome way or other prove of conſequence to ſociety? If all this is admitted as certain; if the faculties of our minds are ſlowly and ſucceſſively developed by application and exerciſe; if reaſon ſhould by its light guide and regulate our propenſities and our will, moderating and enobling them; if it produces virtue, makes us avoid vice and misfortune, and aſſiſts us to eſtimate outward advantages juſtly, and to determine the uſe we ought to make of them; if it is that faculty in us, the right uſe of which makes us moſt reſemble God; is it not a duty of the higheſt conſequence to improve the powers of our underſtanding? In whatever degree we may poſſeſs them, it is the duty of every one as long as they live to labour for their improvement; that is to ſay, to neglect no means af-

forded by the circumſtances in which they find themſelves, which may ſerve to enlighten their underſtandings; to chuſe the beſt and the moſt certain, and to follow them conſtantly; to avoid whatever might obſtruct the choice and uſe of theſe means, and to employ reaſon at all times with entire integrity of heart.

The moſt important queſtions in the deciſion of which man is called on to apply to his reaſon, are without doubt the following, "Whence am I? What am I to do in this world? Where ſhall I go on leaving this life? How am I to attain to the end and to the happineſs for which God has created me? May he not have beſtowed on me, beſides the light of reaſon which is ſo confined and feeble, beſides thoſe feelings of conſcience which I can ſo eaſily ſtifle, when governed by my paſſions, may he not have beſtowed on me beſides theſe ſources of knowledge, a more particular declaration of his will? I am told that ſuch a declaration exiſts. This obliges me to inform myſelf concerning it, to obſerve with care and impartiality the character divinely impreſſed on it, and to proceed in this examination as under the eye of God, and in the firm confidence that he will not allow me to miſtake in an affair which of all others intereſts me moſt deeply. Suppoſe I ſhould not meet with irreſiſtable evidence, probable proof ought to ſuffice for leading me to

faith in the truths of religion, ſince it is a duty which reaſon preſcribes, to follow probabilities which have a degree of credibility ſuperior to what is not probable or merely poſſible. It is, therefore, a duty incumbent on me if my happineſs is dear to me, and in obedience to my creator, not only to aſſiſt my underſtanding by the light of divine revelation, if ſuch a revelation exiſts; but, moreover, to conſider this more particular revelation of the will of God as the greateſt benefit, be ſincerely grateful for it, and to feel nothing a more ſacred obligation than to apply all my powers in the punctual performance of that divine will which is neceſſarily characterized by truth and goodneſs. The reaſon which I have received from God tells me this. Moreover this reaſon, ſuch as it exiſts in man and relatively to mere natural religion, ſtands in need of being ſupported and directed by a revelation; true natural religion in the preſent depraved ſtate of man, not being the work of reaſon left to itſelf, as may be inconteſtably proved from hiſtory.

The moral uſe of our underſtanding conſiſts, in general, in making it ſerve to form a juſt judgment of what is true or falſe, good or bad, proper to advance or obſtruct our happineſs; as alſo, to diſcern what is only an apparent good or evil, though our imagination ſeduced by our deſires, leads us to ſuppoſe it ſuch in reality. We muſt accuſtom our un-

derſtanding not to ſeparate actions from the views which produce them, as if virtue conſiſted merely in the outward obſervance of duty, and not much more in a predominate love of what is right. We are under the ſame obligation to make uſe of our reaſon to diſpel by its light, the falſe luſtre of vice, and to acquire the habit of repreſenting it frequently to our minds in all its native deformity, as the depravity of the heart and underſtanding is what diſhonours the divine nobility of our ſoul, and is moſt oppoſed to the will of God; to which conſiderations we ſhould alſo join the idea of its fatal conſequences, the danger to which we expoſe our health, our reputation, our fortune, our life, and the repoſe of our conſcience; we muſt look on it as a horrible object of divine indignation, and which may render our condition deplorable to all eternity. We ought alſo to accuſtom our underſtandings to judge without precipitation, without allowing ourſelves to be carried away by our ſenſes and our paſſions, ſeduced by the maxims of the multitude, or drawn into falſe concluſions by the force of example. We muſt employ it to diſcover to us the obſtacles we have to ſurmount in well doing; and in ſtudying our inclinations and our opinions we muſt learn to ſubmit all our deſires and exertions to the chief end of pleaſing God, and by ſo doing to attain eternal happineſs. Finally, we muſt apply our

underſtandings to acquire the neceſſary knowledge of arts, trades, and the labours neceſſary to life, and without the exerciſe of which we can never make ourſelves uſeful, nor avoid idleneſs, the moſt dangerous enemy to virtue.

Every man, therefore, who by the aſſiſtance of the natural means of inſtruction, experience and example, can become more intelligent and more wiſe, (and every one may do this) yet who diſdains theſe means, or uſes them negligently, makes himſelf guilty in the eye of reaſon. Not to ſeek theſe means with all the care they deſerve is to neglect a ſacred duty. Whoever enjoys freedom of mind, and is at his own diſpoſal, if he does not devote a certain portion of his time to improve and extend his knowledge, proves himſelf to be very indifferent to truth, and too much enſlaved to eaſe and indolence; and as by a voluntary application to the practice of ſome duty preſcribed to us by reaſon, we may ſtrengthen our perſuaſion of its importance and neceſſity, we muſt own that all thoſe who do not immediately practice what they acknowledge to be right, true, uſeful, and conſequently a duty, as frequently as inſurmountable obſtacles do not ariſe to prevent them, ſtifle and weaken the light of their reaſon. Experience, particularly that of what paſſes within ourſelves, is often the ſtrongeſt and cleareſt proof we can have of truth, and on this account it is an en-

creaſe of the powers of reaſon. When we are not accuſtomed to reflect ourſelves, but always rather chuſe to follow blindly the opinion of others, we bury our reaſon, and give up what we properly poſſeſs to live, if I may ſo ſay, by borrowing. To cultivate our reaſon merely with a view to ſhine, is a kind of diſplay and kind of ſhowy dreſs. All men may form themſelves by inſtruction, commerce with the world, and the exerciſe of a ſound and right reaſon; it is a kind of current caſh: genius, a poliſhed and delicate mind, is a jewel which would loſe much of its value, if it were more common.

The proper cultivation of our memory is alſo a duty of no ſmall importance. We may be ſaid to deprive our underſtanding of its nouriſhment when we neglect to do this; we put it under the neceſſity of ſeeking thoſe truths afreſh, which ought to be already preſent to our minds, together with the proofs by which they are aſcertained. But to cultivate our memory more than our judgment, is in ſome ſort to be deſirous of ſowing continually without ever reaping. We make an unnatural uſe of our memory, when we load it with words of which we do not at the ſame time ſtudy to conceive the clear and diſtinct meaning; the more it is thus ſtored the more the underſtanding is impoveriſhed. It is imagination which gives, as we may ſay, that characteriſtic impreſſion to the thoughts of our minds, which diſ-

tinguiſhes them one from another, and makes them more ſtriking to our underſtanding; which thereby conceives them more forcibly and remembers them better. Imagination colours the pictures which the underſtanding has drawn, contrives thoſe lights and ſhades which throw out the features, and paints them ſucceſsfully as long as reaſon directs the pencil and the tone of the colouring. We cannot, therefore, neglect this faculty of the mind any more than that of memory, neither give ourſelves up too entirely to it, without prejudice to our reaſon and to our knowledge of truth. When a ſolid and penetrating underſtanding is united to a lively imagination, a rich and faithful memory, a noble and a feeling heart, there reſults from this union that ſublime kind of genius fitted to inſtruct whole nations, as long as they are able to comprehend the language in which it has expreſſed itſelf. For the improvement of our underſtandings, therefore, it is neceſſary we ſhould cultivate theſe three faculties, memory, judgment, and imagination, and it is very poſſible to cultivate them all at the ſame time, ſeeing they are properly one, and the ſame faculty whoſe operations alone are different. The later, we apply ourſelves to them, the more difficult the taſk becomes; whereas we make much greater progreſs if we undertake it early in life. That cultivation of the underſtanding which we apply to merely in early youth,

and diſcontinue at a more advanced period, produces nothing but adoleſcents of ſeventy or eighty; and when we think only on the plan we have learnt in the ſchools in our early years, it is, as a certain author ſays, leaving the ſcaffolding up after the building is finiſhed. Obſerve alſo, that as the feelings of the heart, unfold themſelves in children ſooner than the reaſoning faculty, and that our ſentiments being often corrupted before our reaſon is formed, it finds great difficulty afterwards in gaining the aſcendent, and ſecuring its empire, it is of great importance to us to begin by applying ourſelves to the forming our taſte and ſentiments.

Exerciſing and ſtrengthening our reaſon is, moreover, not only a matter of abſolute neceſſity, but the moſt pleaſing and delightful employment. How much ſatisfaction do we derive from the ſtudy of nature, of the ſciences, and of the fine arts! What a ſource of advantage to our hearts, and of ready means to poliſh and give luſtre to our manners!

The fine arts ſuch as eloquence, poetry, painting, ſculpture, architecture, and muſic, have no other determined rules than thoſe traced out by nature. The underſtanding dwells on them with pleaſure, when they are well expreſſed, and according to the relation they bear to one another. It acknowledges in the precepts of art, the expreſſion of its own ideas, and pleaſes itſelf with ſeeing the fine arts ſub-

jected to the ſame laws as nature, where all is harmonized and tends to one principal end. The heart is alſo pleaſingly affected by the agreement of theſe rules with the ſentiment it feels of what is beautiful and becoming; and without any neceſſity of intending to become orators, we read with pleaſure and advantage the precepts of eloquence, dictated by a Cicero or a Fenelon.

However uſeful and agreeable we may find an acquaintance with the rules, it is not to be compared with the pleaſure which the productions of the ſciences and of the fine arts conveys to us, nor with the advantages reſulting from them to our hearts and underſtandings. Let us take hiſtory for example. What a variety of emotions ariſe in our minds, when hiſtory tranſports them to paſt ages, and brings before them the different ſcenes which exhibit men, their actions, the ſprings which put them in motion, their views and their paſſions; when it makes theſe act and think as in our preſence, ſometimes in a ſtate of elevation, ſometimes in a ſtate of debaſement, ſometimes wiſely, ſometimes fooliſhly, ſometimes virtuouſly, ſometimes viciouſly. It is always the ſame ſpecies of creature it preſents to our view, men worſe or better, more or leſs happy ſome than others, but in infinite variety of circumſtances; always that ſame ſpecies which loves itſelf and aſpires to happineſs, though by ſuch different means;

always the ſame ſpirit but of which the good or the bad uſe is infinitely diverſified; truth to be met with every where, and ſtill more frequently error; innumerable virtues and vices, and frequently vice diſguiſed under the appearance of virtue; every where ideas of the divinity, but ſtrangely disfigured in many places. What an affecting and inſtructive ſpectacle for the underſtanding! Here ariſe laws, order, and good morals; States flouriſh and eſtabliſh themſelves by labour and courage; there, laws are without force, and order is overſet by the vice, which triumphs over them; a ſpirit of dominion, plots, diſſentions, excites bloody wars; abundance produces luxury, idleneſs, and theſe deſtroy the happineſs of a nation. Here the arts and the ſciences come to perfection, and with them the manners and underſtandings of the people; there, is a nation in which neither the ſciences nor the fine arts are cultivated; its manners are coarſe and ſavage, all its ſcience conſiſts in being courageous and greedy of victories. Sometimes virtue and induſtry is rewarded, at others, vice obtains the preference. Sometimes we ſee a tragical event, or a fortunate ſucceſs, which no human prudence could foreſee. Sometimes a circumſtance prepared by the events of the preceeding age, or elſe one wholly unexpected and againſt all probability. All theſe different ſcenes keep our minds in that ſtate of activi-

ty which is its proper element. It forms compariſons, judges, admires, loves or hates, approves the happineſs of worthy people, and is diſſatisfied with that enjoyed by the wicked; it rejoices or ſuffers with the innocent, and takes an intereſt in the puniſhment of vice; It is ſurpriſed or alarmed, always in expectation of what is to happen, and this expectation is often diſappointed. It remarks the cuſtoms and manners of different nations, their genius and their defects, their laws, their religious practices, their great men, their men of diſtinguiſhed abilities, what they have conceived and executed, and the mode in which the have been rewarded. It ſees all this and every where (O how delightful the proſpect.) It diſcovers traces of an all wiſe and all powerful Providence, which regulates the lot of men, without ſhewing itſelf openly, but yet ſufficiently diſcoverable to make them attentive to what it requires from them.

It is thus that hiſtory procures us ſo much ſatisfaction; but we muſt reflect very little on the good and bad examples it preſents to us, if we do not feel ourſelves excited to love virtue and deteſt vice; it would even be difficult to run it over with ever ſo little attention, and not perceive that it gives us the moſt uſeful rules for our conduct in civil life.

The chef-d'œuvres of eloquence and poetry are equally calculated to delight and form the mind.

Poetry is ſometimes more inſtructive than hiſtory. It compoſes its examples on ideal excellence, inſtructs as much and pleaſes more; memory willingly retains truths ornamented by poetry, the underſtanding attaches itſelf to it and the heart feels it. An orator who preſents theſe ſame truths with eloquence, makes alſo lively impreſſions on the heart and underſtanding.

Aſſociate one fine art with another, each one has its particular beauty, and all pleaſe in as much as they imitate nature; the uſeful even ſhews itſelf in them under the appearance of the agreeable.

The art of painting creates man anew, gives durability to his features, and by the arrangement of colours gives to one a gracious ſmile, to another an auſtere gravity, to one, the winkles of old age, to another the vigour of youth; it diſplays the ſoul and paints its virtues to our imagination. Poſterity may ſee as diſtinctly as ourſelves the perſon we have under our eyes. By his enchanting art, the painter makes that feeble old man who heavily leans on his ſtick walk, and we ſeem diſtinctly to hear him pant. Another miſerable object appears to us inconſolable and we weep with him; as on the other hand, we ſhare the joy repreſented on the other ſmiling countenance before us. What man can ſuch an enchanting art leave cold and inſenſible!

When we employ ourſelves frequently and with

propriety on works of art, we improve our taſte whilſt we delight it, and this taſte for the chef d'œuvres of art, makes us more capable of perceiving its beauties, and excites in our minds a greater ardour in the purſuit of them. It is impreſſed with an idea of beauty, order, harmony, and ſublimity, which it finds ſo happily brought into action in the productions of poetry, eloquence, painting, and architecture. It leads us inſenſibly to form our conduct and our outward propriety of manners, on theſe general rules, with which we are furniſhed by nature, to avoid whatever may create diſguſt, and to adopt whatever may be agreeable. Thus one who poſſeſſed with a taſte for the arts, properly applies it in his intercourſe with ſociety, will be a man well informed in the manners of the world; this knowledge will participate of the delicacy and ſolidity of his taſte, formed by the ſtudy of what the fine arts expreſs of graceful, noble, and grand. Can it poſſibly happen that theſe ſhould not make ſuch an impreſſion on the heart as muſt influence the ſentiments? It may as well be ſaid, that we may be continually expoſed to the rays of the ſun, without feeling its heat. Did the fine arts merely afford us an innocent amuſement they would be highly valuable. Our ſituation, our employment leaves us ſome leiſure, which the fine arts fill up advantageouſly; we cannot labour or ſtudy without relaxation, and what

eſſential ſervice do we receive from the arts, when they refreſh our minds, and give us new ſtrength to apply to our buſineſs. The pleaſure they afford us, turns us aſide from idleneſs and more ignoble paſtimes. Many a young man, whoſe moments of leiſure are paſſed in the practice of muſic, would perhaps, without this reſource have ſpent them in diſſipation. The pleaſure we derive from the fine arts, is likewiſe a ſocial enjoyment. We can make others ſhare it with us, and the contemplation of an excellent production of art, or the reading a highly finiſhed work may occupy a whole company agreeably. We are in a capacity of furniſhing converſation and making it intereſting, whilſt thoſe who are wholly unacquainted with the arts are forced to remain ſilent. It is alſo by their means that many painful moments in life become leſs irkſome; and the praiſes given them by Cicero, who was himſelf ſo good a judge on this ſubject, are no way exaggerated.*

The fine arts being deſtined to procure us an

* The ſtudy of the fine arts is the food of youth, the recreation of old age, the luſtre of proſperity, the reſource and conſolation of adverſity. It occupies us agreeably at home: it is of uſe to us abroad; at night, in travelling, in the country, it is our pleaſant and faithful aſſociate. Suppoſe that we ourſelves have not taſte or capacity to enjoy theſe advantages, we ought, at leaſt, to admire them in others. *Cicero pro Archia.*

innocent and uſeful amuſement, we become culpable when we make them ſerve to repreſent indecent objects, dangerous to the mind and heart, by the ideas and paſſions they may excite, and are intended to excite. An excellent painter without modeſty, an ingenious but licentious poet, may be injurious throughout many ages, and become criminal towards whole nations. Whoever allows himſelf to imbibe a reliſh for their works, prepares a poiſon for his heart under the pretence of taſte. We may without wounding our conſcience devote the time we have to ſpare from our important duties to thoſe objects of taſte, which contribute to our recreation. But it is a total ſubverſion of order and never to be overlooked by reaſon, not to give our time and attention to our proper buſineſs, and to ſpend our whole life in the cultivation of arts which amuſe us, but which we are not called by our vocation to exerciſe. Are we placed in the world merely to conſume our days in agreeable reveries? And when to ſatisfy our taſte or an immoderate deſire of knowledge, we ſhut ourſelves up in our ſtudies or our laboratories, without doing any thing all day, except reading and making obſervations as aſſiduouſly as agreeably, is it not ſpending an idle life, uſeleſs to ſociety, and entirely devoted to pleaſure, whatever ſtretch of underſtanding it may require? Cheſs alſo

requires application ; but would it be reaſonable to apply during the whole of our lives to this game? Surely every employment and exerciſe of our mental faculties ſhould have for its object to make us more intelligent, better and more uſeful to ſociety. Setting aſide this, our ſtudies, our readings, our meditations, are only a kind of debauch in which we allow ourſelves for the gratification of the ſenſuality of our minds.

It is the application of uſeful things, the noble aſſiduity in employing our talents that can fulfill the deſtination of man. In beſtowing on him the faculty of thinking, God ſays to him ; labour to produce your own happineſs and that of your fellow creatures.

SEVENTEENTH LESSON.

CONTINUATION OF THE PRECEDING LESSON; PARTICULARLY ON THE APPLICATION OF OUR MINDS TO THE STUDY AND CONTEMPLATION OF THE WONDERS OF NATURE.

NATURE being to us a ſource of important truths and uſeful knowledge, we are all called upon to ſtudy and contemplate it according to our capacities and opportunities. It is not only a noble and agreeable occupation for the heart and underſtanding, but alſo a means of improving them. Moſt men regard with a careleſs eye, the proofs God has given us of his greatneſs, though nature has placed them in our view; either from not having been taught to reflect on them, or from having been accuſtomed from early infancy, to ſee them daily. A rational and well directed education ſhould have in view to prevent this want of attention. Whoever from his youth, has as far as his underſtanding

would permit, learnt to know the nature of every object before him, and to obſerve the wiſdom, the art and the effects of the power which breaks forth in every part of this univerſe, will be always better qualified to perceive the ways of God and his perfections, ſo ſenſibly impreſſed on all the objects which ſurround him, and to conclude from thence how great muſt be his Majeſty, his power, his goodneſs, and his holineſs. Yes, whoever is thus inſtructed and diſpoſed, will find, on whatever ſide he turns his eyes, a ſecret indication that God is preſent every where, and attentive to the conduct of men. Even in the midſt of what preſents to his mind an idea of diſorder, he will be forced to recollect that being whoſe goodneſs is announced throughout the earth, and who by his wiſdom has ſo conſtituted mankind, as to enable them to uſe his gifts with ſentiments of joy. But ſeldom, alas! is this direction given to our underſtanding, and for this reaſon we ought to ſupply the defect, in proportion as our underſtandings open. We have no better means of ſupplying this defect, than to accuſtom ourſelves to the contemplation of nature, and to make uſe of the knowledge of others, to aſſiſt us in this contemplation. Its wonders make a feeble impreſſion becauſe they are continually before us. But to awaken us to a ſenſe of them, a deſire of learning and of knowing the works of nature, it is neceſſary to rouſe us from

our liſtleſs indifference; inſtead of ſlightly glancing over them a careleſs eye, as it were by chance, to make us ſtop and conſider each object, not only as to its outward form, but to reflect on its deſtination, its uſe, the pleaſure it procures us, the admirable compoſition of its parts, their regularity, their beauty, and their variety. Every thinking man may continually find thouſands of opportunities for the cultivation of this ſtudy. A leaf which we ſee unfolding itſelf, without at all attending to it, a flower which we tread under foot without being ſtruck by the ſplendour of its colours, an inſect which we conſider as far below our notice; what wiſdom may we not trace in their formation, what admirable art does the compoſition and aſſemblage of their parts indicate, unleſs we abſolutely refuſe them our attention! Let us decompoſe a flower or a leaf, not forgetting to attend to the good odour it diffuſes, and to what is wonderful in the agreeable feeling with which it affects us. Whence has the flower this balſamic odour? And why does this and a thouſand others ſend forth various ſmells, though all ſuch as give us pleaſure? What a mixture of delightful colours, the tints in this flower, the elegance of its form, do not theſe contribute more to make it beautiful than could be effected by any other arrangement of ſhape or colour. Its leaves are compoſed and placed ſo as to make a regular whole. If one was wanting

the ſymetry, the methodical arrangement would ſuffer. How many ſmall parts, what a multitude of filaments and canals do theſe leaves contain! Every one of theſe ſmall parts form a whole in itſelf, from which nothing muſt be removed, and to which nothing muſt be added; a whole complete in its compoſition, and which harmonizes with the ſtructure of the flower and its deſtination. Conſider the cup which incloſed the leaves, and from whence they diſengage themſelves by degrees and all at the ſame time: do you not admire its ſurpriſing texture? Moreover, the ſap which ſupplies the flower with nouriſhment, paſſes through the ſecret canals contained in the ſtalk, which is itſelf fixed to the bulb, of fibres which penetrate into the earth, and pump its juices to diſtribute them into every part of the plant. Thus an attentive conſideration of one ſingle flower, (and how many different ſorts exiſt!) preſents to our mind ſo many ſubjects for reflection and ſo widely extends its views, as to be hardly within the compaſs of its powers. There are, however, few minds ſo contracted, as not to be in ſome ſort capable of employing themſelves in theſe conſiderations. And when we contemplate nature with ſuch an attention, we multiply its charms, and the ſenſations they produce in us affect us more delightfully. Let us employ ourſelves in ſome of theſe pleaſing and inſtructive conſidera-

tions, which preſent themſelves naturally at the ſight of the ſenſible objects exhibited to us by nature. Every thing in them indicates to a reflecting mind, wiſdom, order, and the double intention of procuring utility and pleaſure. It is impoſſible to ſurvey, however haſtily, the vaſt and magnificent kingdom of plants, without being ſtruck with the order of the ſeaſons in which they ſucceſſively ſhew themſelves. They appear as it were on the ſcene one after another, in order to fill it throughout the year, and that man may continually have under his eye, the enjoyment of fruits and flowers. The vegetable kingdom ſupplies the wants and pleaſures of men and animals. If all fruits were produced at once, how could we gather, preſerve, and feed on them, eſpecially as many of them do not long preſerve their taſte? The hotteſt months of the year furniſh us with refreſhing fruits, whoſe juices reſtore our exhauſted ſtrength. Were grapes to ripen in ſummer, the beneficent liquor we expreſs from it would eaſily turn ſour; and if every ſort of flower was to blow at once, how ſhort and fatiguing would be the pleaſure we ſhould derive from them! The ſeaſon of flowers, from whence ſo many inſects draw their ſubſiſtence in ſummer, paſſes, and the wiſdom of the author of nature plunges theſe inſects into a profound ſleep, during which they have no need of nouriſhment. We are aſtoniſhed at the variety of plants of which

we already know more than thirty thouſand different ſpecies is aſtoniſhing, yet how many thouſands more lie concealed from us at the bottom of the ſea. It is alſo impoſſible to take the ſlighteſt view of nature, without obſerving that its different productions approach one another by almoſt imperceptible degrees. Beginning by inanimate beings, we ſee that there is but a very ſmall interval, between two ſpecies which approach the neareſt to one another; they form a chain, of which the ſuperior link ſeems to unite with the laſt of the organic bodies. The vegetable kingdom borders on the mineral. The pretended flower of coral, which was ſuppoſed to be a ſea plant, has been found by late diſcoveries to be a real animalcule. Thus by innumerable degrees, perfection goes on encreaſing from animal to man, and from man, according to what we learn in ſcripture, to angels, archangels, and other ſuperior intelligences.

Examples without number of the wiſdom which is manifeſted in the works of nature, offer themſelves to the admiration of man, and are within reach of the moſt uncultivated underſtanding.

What are oceans, ſeas, lakes, but immenſe cavities, great reſervoirs hollowed by the hand of the Almighty with infinite wiſdom, that the evaporation from the waters contained in them, may produce clouds, ſprings, and rivers, which ſerve to preſerve the verdure, the beautiful appearances of the coun-

try, the communication between men, and contribute to nouriſh and delight all creatures which inhabit the earth.

Mountains are one of the eſſential beauties of nature, if we conſider their different uſes for collecting vapours, which furniſh the ſprings and rivers with inexhauſtible ſupplies; for forming metals; for affording protection from hurtful winds and the rigour of certain ſeaſons; and to vary the appearance of nature which would be otherwiſe too uniform and leſs agreeable. But why ſhould there be mountains eternally covered with ſnow and ice? For the uſe and pleaſure of the world conſidered as one great whole. From theſe mountains is diſtilled a beneficent water, the ſources of which are by the melting of the ſnow prevented from being dried up in ſummer; a ſudden melting of the ſnow would cauſe a univerſal inundation. Even the apparent irregularities of nature furniſh an attentive ſpectator with proofs of a wiſdom and goodneſs, which has in them provided for our advantage and our ſatisfaction. An equal degree of heat ſpread over the whole of our globe, which a confined underſtanding might conſider as moſt advantageous, would however deprive us of that admirable variety in the productions of nature which conſtitutes one of its chief beauties. The conſequence would be that the winds would no longer have the ſame power of ac-

tion, and that would produce a peſtilential quality in the air breathed by men and animals, which theſe winds are intended to purify by their agitation. There exiſt noxious plants and animals, which nevertheleſs poſſeſs medicinal virtues calculated to cure or ſoften many human maladies and infirmities. And what is a wiſe diſpenſation of which we cannot but be ſenſible, venomous plants are very ſeldom found amongſt thoſe which are intended for our food, but, as is the caſe with wild beaſts, are generally found in ſolitary and remote places. Geography may be very uſeful in ſhewing us the wiſdom, goodneſs, and power of God ſo viſible in the diſtribution of the goods of the earth in different countries, ſo that the conſideration of the advantages with which he has enriched our globe, ſerves no leſs to our edification than to our information in natural hiſtory. Who can contemplate animals, without being aſtoniſhed at their admirable inſtinct, at that innate capacity which in the greateſt part of their operations leads them to employ mechanical and other powers ſuperior to thoſe of men, who may often derive from them uſeful leſſons. Bees and the beaver have a geometrical mode of conſtructing their habitations, which deſerves attention. Who cannot ſee the ſagacity of animals in the choice of their food, in the particular conſtruction of their neſts or retreats, the anxi-

ous care they take of their little ones, but which laſts only till they can themſelves provide for their wants; in the ſtrength and the courage of the weakeſt and moſt timid animals when called upon to protect their young; in the proportion obſerved in the number of individuals of each ſex, and in a thouſand other things, convincing ſigns of ſupreme wiſdom? Why do ſome animals feed entirely on the fleſh of others, theſe on plants, and the plants derive their nouriſhment from ſtones? A ſingle old oak is a world to a whole colony of animals, who find in it their ſubſiſtence, either in its leaves, in its fruits, in its trunk, in its branches, or in its roots.

It is eaſy to underſtand, that were it not for the daily motion of the earth, one of its ſurfaces would be continually buried in thick darkneſs, and laid waſte by froſts, whilſt the other hemiſphere would be conſumed with heat and dryneſs, and would be only a burning ſolitude, unfruitful, and the grave of every living thing. The marvellous ſyſtem of the great heavenly bodies, into which the general eye cannot penetrate, offers, however, features adapted to its capacity when aſſiſted in the contemplation by ſuch an author, as Fontenelle. By his means the moſt narrow underſtanding may conceive that in the planets, which compoſe our vortex, there is twelve hundred times more ſpace than on our earth, that,

conſequently, we do not form the thouſandth part of the inhabitants of the planetary ſyſtem; and that if each fixed ſtar is a ſun, only of the ſize of ours, which has alſo its planets, and that each planet has as much ſpace in which to lodge its inhabitants, as thoſe of which our ſun is the centre, it follows that the number of beings which inhabit them muſt be prodigious. What, conſequently, muſt be the infinite grandeur of him who created them, knows them, and preſerves them! How much do theſe conſiderations extend the views taken in by the human underſtanding, and how fitted are they to lead us to glorify the power, the wiſdom, and the goodneſs, of the author of nature! Suppoſe that part of the heavens, commonly called the milky way, to contain above thirty thouſand ſtars, and that all theſe are inhabited by animated beings, great God! how many millions of nations bleſs thy hand which has formed and preſerved them. *Who* ſtretcheſt out the heavens like a curtain, who laid the foundation of the earth, that it ſhould not be removed for ever; who coveredſt it with the deep as a garment; the waters ſtood above the mountains; at thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they haſted away; who ſendeth the ſprings into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beaſt of the field, the wild aſſes quench their thirſt. By them ſhall the fowls of the heaven have their*

* Pſalm, 104.

habitation, and ſing among the branches. He cauſeth the graſs to grow for the cattle, and herb for the ſervice of man, that he may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man. The earth is full of thy riches, ſo is this great and wide ſea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts; there go the ſhips, and there is that leviathan, whom thou haſt made to play therein. Theſe wait all upon thee, that though mayeſt give them meat in due ſeaſon. At length the pſalmiſt exclaims with enthuſiaſm, *O Lord! how manifold are thy works, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches.*

ON THE HUMAN BODY.

Man being the moſt perfect work of creation, is to himſelf an object full of inſtruction, and of the moſt intereſting ſtudy. His body, the mere habitation of his ſoul, is a little world in which ſhines forth wiſdom and harmony. The compoſition of all its parts, is moſt exact, and that of many of them exquiſitely delicate. Each is particularly adapted to its uſe, which frequently extends to more than one purpoſe; and the organs of ſenſes ſo various, unite however in the great end of preſerving life, in giving a facility to labour and to the exerciſe of the ſuperior faculties of the ſoul. The mouth which receives our food, and the tongue which co-operates with it to this purpoſe, are alſo uſeful in another manner,

viz. in manifeſting the thoughts of our hearts. What an abridgement of wonder is contained in that ſingle organ the tongue! Thou tongue canſt alone make us ſenſible of what the mind conceives, and thought, by thy means rendered articulate, is made to ſound in our ear. The agreeable tones, which thou knoweſt how to modify, delight and ſubjugate; is the mind which animates thee impreſſed with joy, thou doſt communicate it, to all who underſtand thy language. Myſtery which no human genius can penetrate, O tongue, by whom ſo many wonders are performed, is there a ſingle man who thinks on them with any attention, who is not warmed with gratitude, and a deſire to make thee the herald of his creators praiſe?

Sight the moſt delicate of our ſenſes, is mans moſt watchful guard to warn him of all the perils which threaten his life. The upright poſture of his body gives him a dignity which diſtinguiſhes him advantageouſly from other animals. Many of his members and of his ſenſes, which are moſt neceſſary, are given to him double: providence intending by this means, to obviate the incapacity, in which the loſs of one of them would place man, were it the only one, in providing for his wants, and ſharing in the occupations and recreations of ſocial life. The power, the delicacy, and the diſpoſition of the ſenſe are exactly meaſured. Were the ſight of man weaker

and his hearing leſs good, the objects of nature and their beauties would be in a great meaſure concealed from him, and ſocial intercourſe be much impeded. But a microſcopic eye would make many of theſe objects diſguſting or terrifying to him; and if his eyes performed the office of a magnifying glaſs, ſmall eminences on which his ſight reſts with pleaſure at a diſtance, would change into mountains, mountains into enormous maſſes, and pleaſant valleys into horrible abyſſes. If the power of hearing was to encreaſe in proportion, the noiſe of thunder would deafen us, and the voice of man would ſound in our ear like thunder, a continual confuſion of ſound would perpetually trouble our repoſe, and we ſhould no longer feel the comforts of tranquillity and retirement. Suppoſing the touch to be more fine and delicate, what now to us ſeems ſmooth would occaſion us acute pains.

The motion of the internal parts of our bodies, on which the duration of our lives more immediately depends, proceeds almoſt wholly independent of us. We can neither haſten nor retard them by any immediate act of our will. Had the mind been obliged to watch over the motion of the blood, the animal ſpirits, and the nerves, it would have been incapable of applying to any thing elſe. Our mind, therefore, is unconcerned in producing the motion of the different parts of our bodies. Our ſenſations

only give us notice of the changes, the circumſtances, and the preſence of objects concerning which it is neceſſary we ſhould be informed. But the motion of our head, our eyes, our mouth, our tongue, our feet, and our hands, thoſe abſolutely eſſential organs in which ſo much art is demonſtrated, depend entirely on our will. In all theſe evidently wiſe arrangements, who cannot perceive our creator's tender care of all animated creatures? man is the weakeſt and the moſt incapable of ſupplying his wants, when he comes into the world. Hardly does he acquire the power of ſo doing, at the end of ten or twelve years, whereas all other living creatures attain this capacity in the ſpace of ſome months, and very few require more than four or five years to attain the age of maturity. This ſeeming imperfection of man, is ſo little ſuch in reality, that on the contrary, it furniſhes freſh proof of wiſe and uſeful arrangements. We find a compenſation and a reſource againſt the weakneſs of our firſt years, in the tender affection of our fathers and mothers; and if our progreſs is ſlow, it is becauſe our faculties demand and are capable of acquiring different degrees of development and improvement. The means of providing for our preſervation, require much labour and capacity; we are ſuſceptible of many more noble pleaſures than other living beings, and which have their ſource in uſeful and agreeable

arts, to the knowledge of which we can only attain by means of a long education, and of many precepts joined to the imitation of others. How much time is neceſſary even to learn our mother tongue? What dexterity is required even in the common art of agriculture and other operations of rural and domeſtic œconomy? With a body early endowed with its full ſtrength, and a ſoul totally devoid of all knowledge in arts, ſciences, or even in the moſt common and eſſential affairs of ordinary life, we ſhould be entirely ſelf willed and ungovernable, we ſhould rebel againſt our parents and teachers. Since, therefore, being in a ſtate of dependence is neceſſary for us, it was alſo neceſſary that we ſhould not poſſeſs too early, thoſe powers which would induce us to ſhake off a yoke ſo indiſpenſable and ſo ſalutary.

ON THE SOUL OF MAN.

Every thing in the ſoul of man, as well as in his bodily frame, is directed by wiſe views, whether we conſider his intellectual faculties, or his moral qualities, and his innate propenſities. Men poſſeſs the gift of reaſon in common, though it differs ſo much in individuals as to the degree of their knowledge and capacity; this difference itſelf, which at firſt ſight appears a defect, is in reality a perfection. If we had all the ſame degree of penetration, and if every one found in himſelf all the reſources of know-

ledge and ſatisfaction, which information is calculated to procure, it could not but be prejudicial to the ordinary intercourſe of ſociety, which is, however, ſo uſeful in promoting the progreſs of learning, to the intereſting connections of friendſhip, as well as to that noble emulation which preſuppoſes ſomething to be wanting in us, which we feel ourſelves excited to endeavour to obtain. The progreſſive and retarded development of our reaſon, ſerves to give more conſiſtency to its powers. Each ſtep it advances gives it freſh vivacity, and the difficulties it has already ſurmounted, inſpires it with the patience and courage requiſite to its undertaking new labours. The neceſſity of a painful inſtruction in our early youth, inſpires us with a becoming miſtruſt of our own underſtandings and a diſpoſition to ſtudy and attention, which is a ſource of knowledge, and the beſt preſervative againſt the error of imagination and the tyranny of pride. The power which our minds have of acquiring more capacity and facility by exercife is viſibly in its conſequences, ſometimes a reward to virtue, ſometimes a puniſhment inflicted on vice. The laſt vice we have fallen into, always produces a greater incapacity for the enjoyment of pure and noble ſatisfactions, at the ſame time that it produces an encreaſe of miſery; ſo, on the contrary, our laſt act of virtue encreaſes our capacity for pleaſure and well doing. The moral ſenſe which all men

have of juſt and unjuſt, is a beautiful proof of the noble origin of our ſouls. However certain it is in fact, that virtue and vice, what is right and our duty, can be proved to demonſtration, and acknowledged by our reaſon, this method would nevertheleſs be ineffectual for the inſtruction of the greateſt part of mankind, who are ſo ſtrongly attached to objects of ſenſe, and ſo little capable of reflection; had not God impreſſed in their hearts a moral inſtinct, a conſcience which acts ſo readily and ſo powerfully on us, becauſe its action addreſſes itſelf to our feelings. Let the ſocial principle be ſtruck out of the ſyſtem and aggregate of our propenſities, from that moment mankind ceaſes to be a natural ſociety, intimately connected by common intereſts and inclinations. From the diverſity of our talents, of our faculties, and of our capacities, ariſe our different obligations and the ſubordinations of ſociety; and our mutual deficiences in things eſſential to our well being, ſupport and ſtrengthen reciprocal and immutable duties. If nature had not denied to another, ſome advantage which ſhe has beſtowed on me, that other would be wholly taken up with himſelf, and would not think at all of me.

Our ignorance of what is to befall us in future, ſeems an imperfection, but in reality conſtitutes our felicity. It guards us in proſperity from a preſumptu-

ous ſecurity, and in adverſity from inaction and deſpair.

We may augment the liſt of theſe obſervations on the phyſical and moral ſtate of the beings, which compoſe the ſyſtem of nature;* we may, I ſay, augment it with a thouſand other obſervations made by ourſelves if we are attentive, and inſtead of caſting a careleſs eye, and, as it were, by chance, on the ſcenes of nature, as we are too apt to do, reflect ſeriouſly on them. Thus man learns by contemplating himſelf and the world, to impreſs his mind with the perfections of the all powerful author of his exiſtence. Can he poſſibly improve in the knowledge of nature, without feeling himſelf more ſtrongly affected with ſentiments of admiration; and would it be poſſible to remark every where the order and wiſdom which reign in the arrangement of nature, without feeling ourſelves incited to regulate our own conduct by the rules of order and wiſdom? No one can think more nobly, than he who takes occaſion from every thing to turn his thoughts to God, every where acknowledging his goodneſs, his power, his wiſdom, and his holineſs; ſuch reflections muſt encourage him to follow virtue. It is advantageous to ourſelves and others, when we thus labour to en-

* What is here ſaid is chiefly taken from Derham. That excellent work of Mr Bonnet intitled Contemplations on Nature may alſo be conſulted with great advantage.

large the faculties of our minds, conſequently, to do ſo is our duty. In beſtowing on us reaſon, God has entruſted to us this precious talent, that we might improve it. Can we poſſibly pleaſe him if we do not enter into his views? And if we abuſe or make no uſe of this talent, ſhall we not be accountable for it to him who has given it to us? Has he not formed this univerſe that we might know and adore him in his works, and that they might be a continually ſubſiſting proof under our eyes, of his exiſtence, of the continual care of his Providence, and of the obedience we owe to him. "He* does "not immediately reveal himſelf to us; the plan he "has choſen does not admit of it; but he gives to "heaven and earth the charge of announcing him as "he is. He has adapted our faculties to this divine "language, and he has raiſed geniuſes who have dived "into its beauties, and become its interpreters. Con-"fined for a time in a ſmall and very obſcure pla-"net, we have only that portion of light which is "ſuitable to our preſent ſtate; let us carefully col-"lect all the precious rays of this light; let us not "loſe one of them; let us walk by its brightneſs! "One day we ſhall approach the eternal ſource of "all light, and inſtead of contemplating the artifi-"cer in the work, we ſhall contemplate the work

* This is the concluſion Mr Bonnet draws at the end of his Contemplations on Nature.

" in the artificer! Now we ſee things darkly as in
" a glaſs, but then we ſhall ſee him face to face. O
" man, canſt thou then diſdain to attend to the
" wonders of nature! Favoured child of the author
" of this univerſe, inhabitant of a world which he
" has created by an effect of his benevolence, and
" which he preſerves for the well being of his crea-
" tures, is it then in vain that he has endowed thee
" with reaſon! Thou uſeſt it only to torment thy-
" ſelf, and make thyſelf the diſgrace of nature;
" thou dareſt to deſpiſe what offers the moſt inter-
" eſting ſpectacle, and what the being of beings
" judges worthy of exiſtence; contemplate; all that
" is ſet before thee is but felicity. The whole crea-
" tion is connected with thy uſe and pleaſure."

EIGHTEENTH LESSON.

ON THE DUTIES WHICH HAVE FOR THEIR OBJECT THE QUALITIES OF THE HEART, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE GOVERNMENT OF OUR DESIRES AND PASSIONS.

After having treated on the advantages relative to our minds, we come next to conſider the advantages and good qualities belonging to our hearts. The moſt enlightened and beſt underſtanding, if conſidered in itſelf, and ſeparate from its influence on the heart, is an advantage from which the poſſeſſor derives little or no benefit, and which makes him more unhappy than he would have been without it. Yes, with the moſt extenſive and the trueſt information, with the knowledge of every ſecret contained in the arts and ſciences, with the moſt profound ſtudy of heaven and earth, of the perfections of the firſt cauſe of all that exiſts, of the facul-

ties of man, and of his moſt ſecret diſpoſitions; with the moſt penetrating judgment, the moſt cultivated underſtanding, the moſt refined taſte, we may ſtill be miſerable and indigent, as to what conſtitutes our real good. It is neither our information, nor the extent of our knowledge, that can make us happy, but the uſe and juſt application we make of them to their proper end. Nothing can be more certain than the truth of this propoſition; but, perhaps, it is no leſs certain, that we are not ſufficiently perſuaded of it. We flatter ourſelves that we fulfil our duty in ſeeking after truth; but the ſenſe we have of its acquiſition, its value, and its great utility, is not always accompanied with the ſtill more precious advantage, of which we are too apt to loſe ſight, that of applying it to ourſelves and to the regulation of our own inclinations. It is poſſible to poſſeſs a profound genius, without having in our heart either humanity towards man, or love towards God; we may ſpeak with the tongues of angels, and be but as ſounding braſs and a tinkling cymbal. It is poſſible to glory in a ſuperior degree of knowledge in religion, in regard to matters of deep reſearch requiring ſtrength of underſtanding, and yet be, in fact, an Atheiſt, on whoſe heart religion has no influence; we may underſtand all myſteries, unite in ourſelves all knowledge, and even poſſeſs the gift of prophecy,* yet be as nothing or,

* 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

what is worſe, only a prevaricator. It is poſſible to publiſh volumes, filled with the moſt excellent principles of virtue, and yet be totally uninfluenced by them in our conduct. The underſtanding is not what contributes to make the heart virtuous, on the contrary, it often poiſons the mind, and leads it aſtray into the paths of infidelity. Whatever pains we take to acquire knowledge, whatever degree of penetration and ſolidity of judgment we may attain, and whatever real and conſiderable uſe theſe attainments may be of to ſociety, we can reap no advantage from them ourſelves, if they are merely produced by our mental powers and exertions of ſelf love, without any conviction impreſſed on our heart of the duties theſe powers lay on us to him who beſtowed them, from whom we derive all the faculties of our minds, and who created us to make a proper uſe of them. Theſe faculties and the uſe of them, can only be ſanctified by our intention to direct them to the government of our will, to the improvement of our heart and to general utility. All our knowledge is nothing when it is only for ourſelves and for our own ſatisfaction that we ſeek to acquire, and that we value the poſſeſſion of it. However high the rank they hold in mental qualifications, it is not in the firſt; neither are they in themſelves, the final end we ought to have in view. There is no kind of knowledge ſo entirely confined to the underſtand-

ing, but that, however remote it may ſeem from being calculated to influence the heart, may be ſo applied, when a noble inclination to act well and uſe our faculties conformably to the deſign of the great diſpenſer of all our talents, leads us to ſeek knowledge, to improve it, and to employ it properly.

Our knowledge of moral truths which relate more immediately to the regulation of our hearts, is even prejudicial and diſgraceful to us, in proportion as it falls ſhort through our negligence, of that influence it ought to have on our conduct and inclinations. Whatever our underſtanding acknowledges to be a duty and a virtue with regard to ourſelves, to others, and to our ſovereign maſter, is an idle and barren knowledge, unleſs it influences and attaches our hearts. What name could be given to a diſpoſition of mind which, with the higheſt degree of ſuch knowledge, ſhould entirely neglect to practice it, or ſhould even indulge in quite oppoſite inclinations. The leaſt that can be ſaid of it is, that it is a fooliſh ſcience, whilſt a much inferior degree of the knowledge of truth, but ſufficient to make us good and virtuous, accompanied by the ſincere and attentive practice of it on all occaſions, deſerves the name of heavenly wiſdom. He who has much knowledge but who acts in oppoſition to it, is from that circumſtance more unfortunate than one who is ignorant. The laſt may become better whenever he is in the

way of inſtruction; but what can happen to change the enlightened man, who has hardened his heart againſt truth, by allowing it no influence over his ſentiments and conduct? The angel endowed with ſuperior powers of which he makes a bad uſe, falls into the ſtate and miſery of the devil. Thus the beſt informed man, who either makes no uſe or a bad one of his knowledge, places himſelf on a level with the fool or the villain; let us never loſe ſight of this alarming truth, whilſt ſeeking to acquire knowledge. We may be rich in ſcience and poor in virtue, or deſtitute of ſuperior powers of underſtanding, and abound in noble qualities of heart; be men in point of knowledge, and children in our practice, or children in knowledge, and yet wiſe men as to our virtuous actions and inclinations. We may acquire great credit in the world by the ſuperiority of our views and our principles, make parade of greatneſs of ſoul and firmneſs of mind, yet be overcome by adverſity, ſhew ourſelves preſumptuous in proſperity, and ſink under the leaſt mark of contempt; and like a leaf agitated by the wind, tremble at the leaſt breath of adverſity. In this caſe the ſimpleſt labourer who patiently ſupports misfortune, is a hero in compariſon of us. We may devote our whole lives to learned ſpeculations, and obtain thereby the applauſe of the whole world; crowns of laurel and every mark of honour may ſurround our death

bed in it, yet conſcience may place us on the rack and make us die in horror and deſpair.

As we have already obſerved,* one only virtue properly belongs to the heart, viz. the intention deeply impreſſed on it by reaſon and conſcience, to act in every thing, without exception, in conformity to the end to which God has deſigned us. From this prime virtue, ſpring many other particular virtues and duties. The explanation I am to give of theſe, requires that I ſhould recapitulate them; they conſiſt in reſpect and love towards God, the moderation and ſubjection of our deſires, juſtice and love towards our fellow creatures, induſtry in the duties of our ſtation, contentment, truſt in providence and entire acquieſcence in its decrees.

We have alſo ſhewn, in the firſt leſſon, which ſerves as an introduction to morality, that all theſe virtues are of infinite advantage to the ſoul, and, conſequently, primary objects of duty. In elucidating them, I ſhall ſpeak firſt of the moderation and ſubjection of our deſires, propoſing to myſelf to treat ſeparately of thoſe duties which relate immediately to God.

MODERATION AND SUBJECTION OF OUR DESIRES.

The ſubjection of our deſires conſiſts in the pow-

* Firſt leſſon.

er which the ſoul poſſeſſes of cautiouſly unfolding and wiſely regulating the activity of our natural deſires, conformably to their end and object; to weaken their force when it goes too far, and continues longer than the object requires; to excite them when they are too weak to attain the end they ought to have in view; in a word, to direct every inclination ſo as that far from being prejudicial to others implanted in us, each may conſpire to our own good and that of others, as to their common and chief end. That ſuch a power is an advantage abſolutely eſſential to us, is clear from a too ſtrong or too weak a degree of affection or repugnance occaſioning a warfare between our will, and our conſcience and underſtanding, contrary to the regular order which ought to ſubſiſt in all our inclinations. Without this power, our natural inclinations which relate to the preſervation of our life and well being, degenerate into hurtful paſſions. The love of life and health becomes reſtleſs timidity; the deſire of ſenſual pleaſure effeminate voluptuouſneſs; the deſire of riches or the means of ſubſiſtence avarice; that of eſteem and promotion vain glory, pride a domineering ſpirit; and the deſire of repoſe and of the conveniences of life indolence and idleneſs. It is the office of wiſdom, to reſtrain all theſe deſires within the bounds aſſigned them by reaſon and conſcience; and it is in moderating our deſires from a

principle of reſpect for the divine will, joined to a firm reſolution never to depart from this practice, that conſtitutes the empire over our hearts and inclinations, which is a conſtant advantage and a ſacred duty, as without it neither our own happineſs nor that of others can ſubſiſt. Inſtead of entering into deep reaſonings, let us illuſtrate what has juſt been ſaid on our natural inclinations by ſome examples.

First, The love of life and health is but a miſerable and ſervile puſilanimity, when we do not moderate and regulate it conformably to virtue.

Eraſtus is attached to life as if he exiſted, merely that he may never loſe it, and as if he enjoyed it only in order to prolong it for ſome years. Nothing is more dreadful to him than ſickneſs and death, and he is wholly occupied in finding out means to eſcape and place them at a diſtance. He is attentive to the ſlighteſt irregularity in his conſtitution, he watches with a puerile anxiety, over whatever may, either immediately or diſtantly, affect his health. He hears the death of a friend and inſtantly turns pale; he ſees a coffin and becomes as if deprived of motion.

Is it then a life paſſed in dread and anguiſh that he deſires, and are not theſe perpetual alarms a continual torment? By this means he annihilates every purpoſe of life; the exceſs of his attachment to it,

and the fear of a premature death with which he is tormented, is preciſely what ſhortens his days. He never thinks himſelf out of danger, and ſhould any really occur, he would ſink under it ſooner than another, becauſe fear deſtroys the courage and preſence of mind neceſſary to the finding out reſources. How many mean actions is he led to by his ill regulated love of life? It is to him in the place of duty, honour, friendſhip, relationſhip, country, or to ſpeak truly, it is more to him than all theſe put together. In order to preſerve his ſovereign good, life and health, he will ceaſe to be obliging, compaſſionate, and uſeful. He will care little for others, whether they are ſick or well, happy or miſerable; he ſees only himſelf in the world, nothing but his own health and life can intereſt him. How can compaſſion find a place in his heart? Self love occupies it wholly and does not leave in it the leaſt vacant place. Is it poſſible to ſuppoſe he can have any inclination to oblige? Can we deſire him to riſk his health, to weaken his conſtitution, to waſte his ſtrength? Secure to him his own life, and he would ſee unmoved all his family die around him, his friend miſerable and his country in danger. On the other hand, let but his health or his life be in danger, and he will not heſitate to cover himſelf with ignominy to obtain ſecurity; if perjury and treaſon appear to him neceſſary for his ſafety, he

will have recourſe to them without conſidering them as unlawful means of preſervation.

The love of life carried to exceſs becomes a paſſion, and in ſo doing fatal to man. Whoever yields to it, ſacrifices his ſerenity of mind, riſks his own ſafety, and runs himſelf in the way of danger. This paſſion ſtifles in him the noble feelings of humanity, and above all, every joy and comfort which even natural religion might procure him. In fact, ſuch a man as Eraſtus does not view his life as the gift of a good Providence, who will continue it to him as long as his wiſdom ſees fit; but acts entirely as if his preſervation depended on himſelf. In oppoſition to this character, let us place one of a perſon who knows how to ſurmount the natural love of life, and you will ſoon be convinced of the great advantage ariſing from ſuch a maſtery.

Erneſtus loves life, as conſidering it a gift from God to be uſed and enjoyed. He dreads intemperance and all the fierce paſſions as ſo many enemies to life and health. He provides himſelf with uſeful occupations, and thereby invigorates his powers. His ſerenity of mind is a balm to his body as well as his ſoul. He neither haſtily wiſhes for death, nor ſees it approach with terror. His life appears to him honourably employed when he uſes it conformably to his duty, that is to ſay, to the will of God. His zeal and conſtant

endeavour to act well, makes him find a ſoothing recompence in an inward ſelf approbation, which places him beyond the reach of accidents, and even of the loſs of life itſelf: if he is to be deprived of it in the proſecution of worthy deſigns, praiſe worthy actions of uſe to ſociety, in labouring for the advantage of his family, his friend, his country and poſterity, he thinks it well loſt in compleating his deſtination. As he watches over his own preſervation without painful anxiety, he never loſes that freedom of mind requiſite to form a ſpeedy reſolution for his own ſecurity, in caſes of ſudden danger. The idea of a Providence who watches over us and who protects us, gives a vigour to his courage entirely oppoſite to that dread of death which makes ſo many others ſhudder, and he enjoys the comforts of life with more ſatisfaction from their continuance not being ſolely dependent on himſelf. If he finds himſelf in a ſituation in which the ſervice of his country, or of religion, makes it neceſſary for him to ſacrifice his life to his duty, and to the advantage of his fellow creatures, he will, though not inſenſible to the loſs, overcome his natural love of life, which he will always keep ſubordinate to the dictates of his conſcience, and to the primary and ſacred obligation of reſpecting the orders of God and the good of ſociety, even at the expence of that life; that is to ſay, he will give up his life with re-

ſignation to him from whom he has received it, and who aſſures him he ſhall poſſeſs it to all eternity. Thus the ſubjection of this paſſion is highly advantageous and brings its reward with it.

Second. The deſire of ſenſual pleaſures confined within certain limitations is lawful; as is that propenſity one ſex feels towards the other, in conſequence of the order of nature eſtabliſhed by God.

A conſtant application to confine this natural propenſity within the bounds which reaſon and conſcience, or, in other words, God himſelf has aſſigned; and a careful attention to refer it to its proper deſtination, is, in fact, to keep it in ſubjection. Indulged beyond theſe bounds, it becomes a diſgraceful, brutal, and ferocious paſſion, for which reaſon the power we acquire over it, is highly valuable and indiſpenſably our duty at all times.

Cleanthus loves good living; he eats and drinks not to ſatisfy the natural deſire of ſubſiſtence, but to prolong the pleaſure he finds in taking his food, to reliſh its taſte, and multiply agreeable ſenſations. He ſatisfies his appetite, and the moſt delicious repaſt does not, in the recollection, afford him the ſmalleſt inward ſatisfaction or comfort, except in the power of repeating it: But he muſt take patience; appetite cannot return till after a pretty long interval; yet he is deſirous of continually enjoying the ſame luxurious ſen-

ſations. His idleneſs leads him to avoid all labour, all occupation; and by this very means he deprives himſelf of that greateſt pleaſure attached to eating, a good appetite; which is only to be obtained by temperance and labour. Let Cleanthus be left at liberty to chuſe the moſt exquiſite diſhes and the moſt delicious liquors, his palate will for ſome time be tickled; but he deadens the organs of taſte, by the frequent and exceſſive uſe of them; and reliſhes ſo much the leſs, as he ſeems to wiſh himſelf all tongue and palate, that he may be the better able to enjoy his meat and drink. His paſſion goes on encreaſing; he would willingly, if his conſtitution permitted, do nothing but eat and drink. Sad reſemblance of a man to a beaſt! You would in time ſee him withdrawn from all ſociety, at his table alone, without friends, without gueſts, living only to gratify his palate, if by this ſolitary exiſtence, he could better indulge in his epicurean life.

Cleanthus has a fortune which he ſacrifices to ſenſuality; he ſtops at no expence to gratify his taſte; but he is too much enſlaved to his ſenſes to conſecrate a part of his fortune to praiſe-worthy undertakings, unleſs forced to it by the dread of public diſgrace. Talk to him of great actions, uſeful eſtabliſhments, generous deeds, he yawns; what you ſay appears to him a tireſome romance, becauſe he

has no congenial feelings to eſtabliſh the truth of it in his own heart. If you ſpeak with pleaſure of your enjoyment of a ſingle plain diſh, in company with a friend, he is ſurpriſed, and the bare idea of ſuch a repaſt alarms him. You drink wine of your own growth and take it ſoberly and ſeldom, you are not the leſs gay and good humoured; he conſiders this as a mere ſtory to divert him. Tell him that from what is ſerved at your table, and which your appetite could allow you to conſume entirely yourſelf, you frequently diſpoſe of a part to ſome poor perſon who has ſeldom an opportunity of taſting ſuch food, and whoſe hunger you take a pleaſure in relieving; he will laugh at this kind heartedneſs and call it weakneſs. This ſame Cleanthus allows himſelf to be ſo much devoted to good living, that, at length, he requires a larger quantity to ſatisfy him; and he overloads his ſtomach with the richeſt food and higheſt diſhes, that he may find ſomething capable of rouſing his appetite, which a quantity of common food can no longer ſatisfy. In regard to drink he takes off, at one draught, whole goblets of wine, inſtead of ſmall glaſſes; and whereas he formerly contented himſelf with two kinds of wine, he now requires ten or twelve different ſorts. According to him a perſon cannot be ſaid to have drunk, unleſs he is tipſey; he would not, however, get abſolutely drunk,

but he never leaves off drinking whilſt the flavour of the wine is agreeable to him. Cleanthus, however, obſerves ſome order in his drinking; he drinks freely at dinner, and ſome hours ſleep clears his head; he begins again at ſupper, and the repoſe of the night diſpels his ſtupor, and on waking he finds himſelf a rational being. He conſiders time only as the rule which directs the intervals he eſtabliſhes between his meals, and mankind as beings who concur in procuring him conveniences, and the means of ſatisfying his appetites. Thus ſenſuality baniſhes from the heart of Cleanthus every good inclination, and from his mind every principle of duty. He weakens his health, ſhortens his life, ruins his fortune, his honour, and even the very faculty of thinking. The violence of this paſſion for eating is the cauſe of his not enjoying any tranquillity, when he cannot gratify it; this on many occaſions makes him a vile flatterer, a cheat, and a villain. How can he be a good father, a good huſband, a good friend, a good citizen, a patriot, or a hero? He reſembles the moſt voracious animal, ſince he cannot repreſs this groſs appetite.

Marcus, the oppoſite character to Cleanthus, is moderate in regard to the pleaſure of eating, has it under command and thereby enjoys it the more. The ſimpleſt food, cooked and ſeaſoned by hunger, the reſult of induſtrious occupation, ap-

pears as delicious, and even more ſo, to him, in the company of his wife and children, or in that of a friend, than the moſt exquiſite viands are to Cleanthus. He feels his ſtrength renovated by the uſe he makes of this frugal nouriſhment, and feels himſelf ſatisfied though he could take more; a refreſhing liquor enlivens him and gives freſh vigour to his ſpirits. He might bear a greater quantity of wine, but he only drinks to encreaſe his ſtrength for the employments he is engaged in, not to ſtupify himſelf. His temperance preſerves him from humours by which he might be incommoded; he feels no heavineſs in his limbs; and the circulation of his blood not being impeded, he is always at liberty to act, ſleeps quietly, and wakes ſerene. He is hardly ever ſuſceptible of ill humour and is leſs ſubject to the ſolicitations of vices, which have their ſource in the blood, in a blood thickened and ſuperabundant. Thus he finds his temperance rewarded, though he is not ſober merely from regard to health; were he even certain the contrary practice would not hurt his conſtitution, ſtill he would not allow himſelf in any exceſſes. It is in ſubmiſſion to the wiſe laws eſtabliſhed by God, that he keeps within the bounds of ſobriety, and makes that uſe of food which he knows to be moſt conſonant to them. If he is deprived of ſome ſenſations agreeable to the palate, he ſupports the privation as of a thing he can

do without. Perhaps he might be able to procure them, but it ſeems to him that the expence they would occaſion might be more properly employed. He ſhares it with thoſe who claim his attention from the ties of blood, merit, or neceſſity. He wiſhes them to enjoy ſome indulgences as well as himſelf, and more ſtill, if they ſtand in real need of them. Thus his ſobriety has an influence over his own benevolence and contributes to the comfort of others. Which is the happier man, the ſober Marcus, or the intemperate Cleanthus?

Another ſpecies of ſenſuality is the paſſion of love, that natural propenſity which the creator has impreſſed on mankind for the propagation of the ſpecies, and to which from motives of wiſdom and goodneſs, he has attached lively ſenſations of pleaſure. When deviating from its proper end, it ſeeks its gratification beyond the bounds of a chaſte and lawful marriage, it becomes one of the moſt culpable paſſions, and can hardly be even mentioned without offence to decency and propriety. No paſſion is more licentious when not ſtrictly reſtrained by duty. Nothing tends more to corrupt the heart, and to haſten the approaches of death than this paſſion, if indulged to exceſs. It becomes a rage which reduces man lower than the brutes, and nature itſelf puniſhes theſe exceſſes by the ſevereſt pains, and re-

ligion denounces againſt it the wrath of God and a rigorous judgment.

This paſſion, which is in itſelf a devouring fire, is alſo capable of ſtifling the beſt inclinations of the ſoul. It enervates the heart and admits into it indolence and effeminacy, luxury and intemperance. There is no vice but what is allied to ſome other, but this is the one which is connected with the greateſt number. It is incompatible with application to buſineſs, with that zeal which produces great and laudable enterpriſes. To attain its end, it practices artifice, ſpares no pains to corrupt, it has recourſe to perjury. It is as ingenious in ſeducing as it is eaſily ſeduced; it inſpires low ſentiments, and baniſhes all ideas of decency. What a diſguſting object is an impure perſon, whoſe countenance bears the impreſſion of impudence!

What melancholy and miſerable objects for ſociety are the victims of incontinence. Beſides their own loſs of innocence, what a diſtreſs to their families, what a torment to themſelves are thoſe who have incurred this irreparable loſs! The ſacred ties of marriage broken and defiled! But let us draw a veil over the abominations of this paſſion, and from its turpitude, let us conclude, that it is a great happineſs to maſter this natural propenſity, that the peace of mind ariſing from a pure and chaſte heart, is truly deſirable. Theſe virtues teach and

encourage us to avoid every irregular inclination towards the other ſex, to guard againſt its impulſe, to preſerve others from it if poſſible, and to make uſe of every means of ſubjecting and governing it according to the rules of virtue; and this from a principle of obedience to God, and of reſpect for the wiſe views of the Almighty in impreſſing this inclination on our natures.

Cleon found means in his youth, by the aid of reaſon and religion, to curb this natural propenſity ſo dangerous to virtue, and to maintain the ſelf gratifying rights and privileges of innocence and an irreproachable conſcience. Modeſty was his faithful companion; he had good examples to direct him, the counſels of a ſincere friend to ſupport him, and the thoughts of that ſupreme being who knows all things, ſerved him as a ſhield againſt the aſſaults of carnal deſires. He early became acquainted with an amiable young perſon whoſe affection and whoſe virtues inſpired him with a generous and laudable attachment. "If," ſaid he often to himſelf, "thou deſireſt to attain the felicity of gaining this young perſon's affections entirely, ſtudy to deſerve it, by following that pure rule of conduct which may lead thee to be an induſtrious man, endowed with talents and virtues, worthy of the inviolable attachment of one ſo deſerving of being beloved. Interdict to thyſelf ſeverely, and ſmother in its riſe every

the leaſt deſire which it would not be proper for thee to avow. Thou wouldſt not love her, but merely thyſelf, if thy love for her had in it any thing diſhonourable. Occupy thyſelf worthily, acquire knowledge in the arts and ſciences, and expect a favourable deſtiny; the happineſs of poſſeſſing the object of thy affection, if it will really be for thy felicity to obtain her. Let us become more and more worthy of each other, in an intercourſe authoriſed by virtue and decorum, and if thou haſt not ſufficient ſtrength to command thyſelf, have wiſdom enough to fly."

At this time Cleon being arrived at man's eſtate, enjoys in the ſociety of this amiable woman, now his wife, and who has alſo made him a father, all the comforts of a happy union; and he would not to obtain the whole world, relinquiſh the ſo gratifying thought, which his conſcience recalls to him as a glorious triumph, the having preſerved his innocence.

Young man, let innocence be alſo the ornament of thy youth, form thyſelf continually to the ſtudy of wiſdom, and ſtill more to that of virtue; that thus virtue and chaſte love may conſtitute thy felicity in mature age. If it is poſſible that thou ſhould'ſt be deaf to the voice of reaſon and conſcience, let that of religion penetrate thy heart. 'If any

man defile the temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.'

* 1 Cor. iii. 17.

NINETEENTH LESSON.

CONTINUATION OF THE PRECEDING ON THE SUBJECTION OF THE PASSIONS; OF THE TRANQUILLITY OF THE SOUL AND OF PATIENCE.

In the preceding leſſon, we have ſpoken on the moderating and bringing our natural inclinations into ſubjection, and we have ſhewn by examples, how neceſſary it is not to allow ourſelves to be enſlaved by the love of life and health, which ought to be ſubordinate to the empire of reaſon; as muſt be alſo that propenſity which leads us to what is properly called love and to all the pleaſures of ſenſe. It remains for us to prove that the ſame muſt be practiſed in regard to the deſire of riches and honours, before we reflect more particularly on the tranquillity of the ſoul.

Third, In two different characters I ſhall place before you the deſire of glory as prejudicial when it be-

comes exceſſive, as it is on the other hand, when kept within reaſonable bounds, calculated to promote our own happineſs and that of others.

The objects of ambition, or of the deſire of glory, are innumerable. There are ſome which from their nature or uſe are more valuable than others, though even theſe which are moſt ſo, do not communicate any additional value to the heart. When we give ourſelves up to this paſſion it fills us with anxiety, leads us to puerile and reſtleſs undertakings, excites pride, envy, jealouſy, indifference, and contempt for the merit of others. If at all wounded, it has recourſe to revenge and calumny, and what is moſt lamentable, it prevents the heart from attaching itſelf to God. Whatever may be the object which excites this deſire of glory, be it ſituation, birth, titles, riches, beauty, capacity in arts and ſciences, courage, authority, ſome particular virtue, it is always a misfortune to us. There is no paſſion which ſo eaſily miſſes its aim as vanity, and there is no one ſo prejudicial to ſociety, while nothing is ſo much eſteemed as modeſty and humility.

Theagenes, a prey to the deſire of being thought one of the moſt learned men of his time, ſuffers a thouſand torments. He ſtudies not to become more enlightened and more uſeful, but to be a ſcholar, to get a name, and to attract general admiration. Whatever cannot increaſe his reputation, he neglects en-

tirely, however good or uſeful it may be. Whatever partakes of the marvellous, however uſeleſs, is in his opinion worthy of his attention. Every commendation, frequently that of fools, fires him with freſh ardour for praiſe. He is engaged in compoſing a work of erudition, he ſits whole nights at it, ruins his health, forgets his family affairs, fails in the duties of ſociety, merely to gain celebrity. He is applauded, and what advantage does he reap from his labours? Glory; but what is the glory? Thoſe words, thoſe ſounds, thoſe glances of the eye, thoſe geſtures by which people expreſs the conſideration in which they hold him, are they ſure proofs of real eſteem? How many ignorant people, how many depraved people are to be found amongſt his panegyriſts? I will, however, allow, Theagenes, that they are all connoiſſeurs, good judges, and that they really think as they ſpeak of your merit. Are you the happier becauſe others conſider you as a prodigy of learning; are you the wiſer, or the more virtuous, for their thinking you ſo? An illneſs may attack you, when engaged on the tenth volume of your immortal work; will your erudition make it leſs painful? Will your reputation for learning enable you to ſupport reverſes with more calmneſs, or to meet death with more fortitude? The end you purſue, is it not uncertain to the greateſt degree? The work of Theagenes is modeſtly criticiſed; he is im-

mediately in a rage. Pantheus is a man of merit and obtains more commendation; Theagenes feels his glory hurt, he cannot endure a rival. Pantheus ought not to be compared with him, and he endeavours to depreciate him. Pantheus defends himself modeſtly; Theagenes is heated; gives a looſe to injurious language and to attrocious imputations againſt the honour of his adverſary, of whom he becomes the declared enemy; merely becauſe he too much admires himſelf, and feels tha the is too inſignificant to bear without envy, that any other perſon ſhould much ſurpaſs him.

If we praiſe this proud Theagenes, he will nevertheleſs deſpiſe us, becauſe he eſteems himſelf infinitely more than us. He will alſo deſpiſe us if we do not praiſe him, becauſe in his idea we are too little informed or too ill diſpoſed, to do juſtice to his merit. At leaſt, he will regard us only in as much as we are blind worſhippers of his opinion, and that we continually offer incenſe to his vanity. To whom will he do a ſervice if not with a view to his own reputation? Suppoſe you are in an obſcure ſtation, but have merit, only you are not known in the world; if you ſtand in need of his aſſiſtance, be aſſured that any one who flatters him more than you do, or who can procure him more celebrity, will be preferred. His heart is ſhut to every feeling, except what affects his on reputation. Buried in the midſt of his

books, it ſeems to him that nothing lives and breathes in all the world around him. The care of his reputation makes him inacceſſible to every other care; and if his labours were not uſeful in ſome way indirectly, our ſcholar would be merely a proud and lazy recluſe, who would propoſe no other end to himſelf, than that of drawing crowds to his retreat, to preſent their offerings; ſo that nothing might be ſo much talked of as his retired life. He might be compared to thoſe enchanted dragons we are told of in romances, as being employed to guard treaſures they themſelves are unacquainted with, but which they do not allow any one to approach. Theagenes ſhews himſelf unjuſt, whenever he thinks it neceſſary to his vain glory that he ſhould be ſo. He will be a negligent father, an imperious friend, a troubleſome colleague, and on all occaſions his own enemy; pride being what moſt expoſes us to ſuffer from the pride of others, from their contempt, or from their malicious remarks. Let us ſuppoſe Theagenes had been born a king or a prince, and that he was ambitious of heroic glory; he would engage in battles as he delights in literary warfare; he would make rivers flow with blood to obtain the glory of victory, he would riſk his life to gain laurels; whole nations drowned in tears would not affect him, provided he could ſatisfy his envy and his jealouſy; he would make war againſt whatever

power refuſed to bow before him, he would deſolate one province, if he could not conquer another. Vain glory is a torment and a ſource of calamities. Could he even be ſo great a favourite of fortune as to find it always faithful to him, ſo as to fulfil all his wiſhes, would he be leſs a prey to anxiety? No, a paſſion for fame is a fire, which neither time nor reputation can extinguiſh.

How much happier is Crates! he aſpires to virtue and merit, rejoices in the acquiſition of it, and in the reſpect and applauſe it procures him. He makes his glory conſiſt in the performance of his various duties, in the uſe of his talents and the advantages beſtowed on him by Providence. He acknowledges, he loves, and eſteems merit in others, becauſe it is a duty and a virtue ſo to do; he labours to improve his own, as his deſtination requires. He is not inſenſible to the fatigue of conſtant labour and application, but he encourages himſelf by the reflection that he can do nothing more honourable than conſecrate himſelf to the benefit of others, nor ſhew himſelf more grateful to God for the privileges beſtowed on him, than by conſidering them as gifts which he by no means deſerved better than others. The conviction of his defects joined to his perceiving that many do not ſtand in need of his aſſiſtance, that others have a no leſs uſeful capacity than his own, and that it is fooliſh to attribute to ourſelves the

merit of advantages we hold entirely from Providence, keeps him humble. Labouring more and more to become worthy of the approbation of heaven, how can he be proud? He bears charitably with the faults and failings of others, takes pains to correct them, and reflects on his own. If he is refused the diſtinction his good qualities deſerve, he does not apply himſelf the leſs to their improvement and to the acquiring additional ones. As he does not pretend to more eſteem than he deſerves, his reputation is the more ſolid; and the time, care, and labour which others ſpend in appearing what they are not, he conſecrates to making himſelf as uſeful as poſſible. How great a happineſs is it to him to conciliate the affection of worthy and enlightened people! Beſides enjoying the approbation of his own heart, he may alſo be certain of obtaining that of him, who is greater than our hearts, as the apoſtle expreſſes it. Free from the anxieties attached to the love of fame, he poſſeſſes true glory. Were he likely to meet with perſons who could view with an evil eye his enjoyment of thoſe lawful advantages, which his application and diſtinguiſhed talents have procured him; has he not deſerved them? Muſt not the happineſs of Crates appear to us to be very great?

The deſire of wealth, the love and purſuit of it, merely for the ſake of poſſeſſing it, and thus to make the

means the end, is the reverſing order contrary to reaſon, an irregular deſire, and the loweſt ſpecies of avarice. He who ſeeks to acquire wealth or who makes uſe of it merely to ſatisfy his own ſenſuality, his vanity, and the whimſies of his imagination, ſeeks and employs it in a manner repugnant to its proper uſe; he is the cauſe of unhappineſs to himſelf, and makes himſelf guilty of injuſtice towards others.

Sempronius ſeeks riches, not to ſhut them up in his coffers; he is not ſo fooliſh as that. He conſiders them as means of obtaining certain ends which he propoſes to himſelf. His fortune is already conſiderable, but his vanity requires a ſtill greater expence. His ſenſes and his imagination demand one thing to day and another to-morrow: can he ever be ſufficiently rich? He ſaves where he ought not to œconomiſe, and is avaricious that he may be prodigal in favour of his vanity and his ſenſuality. Wealth is the means of procuring our own advantage and that of others; with regard to Sempronius, it is merely the means of gratifying his paſſions and caprices. Can he poſſibly conduct himſelf wiſely in following ſuch guides? To-day he wants to ſatisfy ſome whim; it will coſt him a certain ſum and he contrives to lend money at great intereſt. Thus he makes his cupidity ſerve to ſupply his vanity. He gives miſerably low wages to his ſervants, but clothes them in rich liveries; his avarice comes

in aid of his magnificence: a more brilliant equipage and harneſs, a more ſumptuous houſe, and more extenſive grounds, are things which his imagination repreſents to him as highly worthy his deſires, and impoſſible for him to do without. He was not formerly a man who would accept preſents, but he no longer makes any difficulty of receiving a large ſum for ſupporting the claims of a client not very ſcrupulous as to the juſtice of them. This ariſes from his deſire of figuring in the world without diminiſhing his wealth. Thus through whatever channels his avarice makes his riches circulate, they return loaded with freſh ſlime to the muddy ſprings from whence they derive their ſource.

Sempronius cauſes his own unhappineſs. He perverts the uſe of money, and this paſſion cannot but pervert his heart. What he ſpends ſerves only to foment his irregular, fooliſh, criminal, or ridiculous paſſions. He endeavours to make a fooliſh compromiſe, between the deſire of encreaſing his wealth and gratifying his vanity.

Harpagon, who loves money for its own ſake, is the ſlave of a ſtill more vile and prejudicial paſſion. He does not propoſe enjoyment to himſelf, he only wiſhes to acquire, to treaſure up, and to keep his treaſure under lock and key. It is enough for him to know he is rich, that his family will be ſo after his death; and if he extends his views any further,

it is to the idea of paſſing in the world for a man of opulence. He is agreeably flattered when he ſees that his fortune encreaſes, and this inflames him with a deſire of poſſeſſing ſuch immenſe riches as nothing can annihilate. The fear of loſing what he poſſeſſes ought only to make him cautious, but to him it is a conſtantly corroding anxiety. Harpagon refuſes himſelf neceſſaries to augment his ſuperfluities; he allows nothing to his own pleaſure; we cannot wonder he ſhould be no leſs againſt what might procure it to the members of his family. He will never be at peace till he has enough; and when will he have enough? Never, ſo long as he can get any more. How can he enjoy tranquillity? If to encreaſe or preſerve his wealth, anxiety, artifice, meanneſs, hard heartedneſs, the want of equity and charity appear to him neceſſary means, will he be able to reſiſt employing them?

No good ſentiment can be found in a heart, wherein this paſſion predominates. Harpagon makes an idol of his gold. Yet what is this gold? He ſacrifices his repoſe to an advantage of which he makes no uſe, and by his avidity he deprives others of their ſubſtance, or of the conveniences of life. Does not reaſon lay this to his charge as a crime? The deſire of riches ſtifles entirely the light of his underſtanding, and he has no longer any except for the gratification of his cupidity; every ſentiment of

probity and humanity is equally baniſhed from his heart; can we admit as a queſtion, whether Harpagon is unhappy?

By confining the deſire and uſe of riches within juſt bounds, we ſhall ſee that when thus regulated it is agreeable both to wiſdom and peace of mind.

Decius labours to acquire wealth for the ſupport of his family. He is careful to preſerve and encreaſe it. As he is an œconomiſt, he has leſs anxiety in proportion as he is at leſs expence. He provides himſelf with what is neceſſary, and thus he enjoys his fortune, or the fruits of his labours. He conſiders what he poſſeſſes as a depoſit entruſted to his care, and is benevolent and ready to aſſiſt others in proportion to his means.

He has in view the good of the perſon he obliges, and not the return he may expect from him. Induſtry is his delight, and he conſiders the power of being uſeful to any one as a reward for his labours.

The comfort he derives from acting well, nouriſhes in his mind his ſentiments of humanity; labouring to promote the good of others, he procures his own. He obſerves that it is poſſible to poſſeſs the greateſt riches, and yet to be expoſed to numberleſs evils in life, to bodily infirmities, to reverſes which may bring ruin on his houſe, to the falſe imputation of envy, to the ſnares of the wicked, to the anxieties of his own heart, to the attacks of his

enemies; and can he imagine that the desire of wealth includes all the wishes man can form for his own happiness? He cannot be certain that this wealth may not in part, or entirely, be taken from him, and that he may not be for a time deprived of the means of subsistence. This makes him use what he possesses with circumspection, that he may not have to impute to his own conduct, having drawn this misfortune on himself; and as he consults his duty attentively, in regard to the use he makes of his fortune, he trusts entirely to Providence, all those events which are not at his disposal.

He dreads that poverty for which he could have only himself to blame, and arms himself with courage to support patiently that, to which he may be exposed without any fault of his own. Decius sees himself beloved and esteemed, an inward satisfaction accompanies him every where, he enjoys his fortune, he is exempt from avarice, his heart is filled with kindness and benevolence; he blesses Providence, relies on its protection, and finds his happiness in the prudent use of his fortune, and the moderation of his desires in every thing relating to exterior advantages.

Amongst other good effects produced by the rational employment of wealth, without which riches would be a misfortune rather than a blessing, we may reckon preservation from the folly of esteeming

them beyond their juſt value; the reſolution to do without them, whenever we cannot poſſeſs them by lawful means, and entertaining a generous contempt for the goods of fortune, whenever they ſtand in oppoſition to the good of our ſouls. This diſpoſition is a felicity to all who are actuated by it, no leſs than it is a duty and a virtue. Outward advantages have certainly great influence over our comfort. It is undoubtedly pleaſant to enjoy at the ſame time, rectitude of mind and good bodily health; to be rich in virtue and abundantly ſupplied with the neceſſaries of life; to enjoy our own approbation and that of others; it is deſirable to be free from all vice and bodily pain; to feel no want, and never to have any injury done to our reputation. But we live in a world in which no ſituation is perfect, and where every thing is ſubject to change. It is not always in our power to obtain the poſſeſſion of exterior advantages, or to preſerve them when obtained. Theſe advantages are various and we are frequently in want of many of them. No condition is ſo happy as not to be ſubject to many privations; and did we poſſeſs the greateſt portion of wealth, rank, reputation, and health, we could not build with any certainty on its ſtability. In fact, how ſuddenly are we often deprived of theſe advantages without any fault of ours! That calm diſpoſition of mind on the loſs of theſe advantages, and which enables us to endure

with patience the evils of life with which we are threatened, and from which we have no power to eſcape, muſt neceſſarily be a great bleſſing to man ſubject to ſo many revolutions. This diſpoſition to raiſe ourſelves, by hopes and conſiderations of an elevated kind, above the inconveniences and ſufferings attached to our nature, that intrepidity which makes us face an inevitable danger, and that prudence which wonderfully diminiſhes even great evils, form the aſſemblage of thoſe excellent qualities, we denominate tranquillity of mind, courage, humility, and reſignation to the decrees of Providence. Who can doubt but that the efficacy of theſe virtues, in ſoftening the inconveniences and troubles of life, encreaſes our obligation of attending to their cultivation in our hearts?

PATIENCE AND TRANQUILLITY OF MIND.

Patience and tranquillity of mind are precious and indiſpenſable qualities. They ſerve to weaken the diſagreeable and painful impreſſions we receive from the want of certain advantages, or from the various accidents of life. There are evils which no foreſight, no prudence can prevent; diſtreſſes which no induſtry, no human power can remove; evils which ariſe from the imperfections of our nature, and which the moſt conſummate virtue cannot entirely

avert from us, becauſe the moſt conſummate virtue has ſtill its weak and defective parts. Patience and tranquillity of mind fortify us againſt all theſe evils, ſo as not to allow us to feel a cowardly dread of them when they threaten us at a diſtance, nor to let a ſlaviſh fear add to what is in itſelf already ſufficiently painful. Theſe qualities are alſo uſeful in moderating all our uneaſineſs, whenever they aſſail us, and in counterbalancing pain by ſome pleaſing ſentiment capable of producing that effect. Tranquillity of mind is as far removed from natural harſhneſs, as from the fantaſtical inſenſibility of the Stoic. It is the effect of wiſdom and an empire over the paſſions. It can never be indifferent to us whether we endure pains and privations, or whether we do not ſuffer from either; the propenſity of our hearts to the enjoyment of happineſs, preſcribes to us the endeavour to avoid and free ourſelves from ſufferings: but a heart formed to tranquillity, maintains it by wiſe reflections and juſt ideas concerning real good and evil. This tranquillity acquires ſtrength by the conſideration of its being our duty to ſupport the evils and inconveniences inſeparable from our nature, ſeeing we are men, and not pure intellectual beings. When we have not brought theſe evils on ourſelves by our own fault, we gain reſolution by reflecting that they are diſpenſed by a ſuperior being, who ſends them wiſely and even for our good. Be

theſe evils the melancholy conſequence of our own imprudence, or of our irregularities, tranquillity of mind ſoftens the juſt diſpleaſure we conceive againſt ourſelves, by the virtuous repentance we feel for our faults, and which is an earneſt to us, that in future, we ſhall be more circumſpect and moderate. It keeps us from melancholy and deſpair, by exciting us ſo to act, as that the errors we have fallen into, ſhould turn to our advantage by wiſe reflections, and lead us to bear our evils patiently in the hope of aſſiſtance from God. There are many misfortunes which we may avoid or lighten, when ſerenity of ſoul leaves us at liberty to ſeek the means of ſo doing, and that we preſerve ſufficient ſtrength of mind to make a proper uſe of theſe means, without allowing ourſelves to be diſcouraged. Tranquillity of mind contributes to procure us ſtrength and ſerenity, and thus frees us from many evils, or, at leaſt, diminiſhes our keen ſenſe of them. There are many people who derive entirely from imagination that weight of miſery which oppreſſes them. Tranquillity of mind which is the reſult of reflection, takes from actual evil the terrifying appearances with which imagination clothes it; it preſerves us from a puerile failure of courage; leads us to think that if the want of great wealth, which we could uſe wiſely, is an evil, there is, at the ſame time, a greatneſs of mind, and a ſource of tranquillity, in being

able to deſpiſe the goods of fortune, as not being eſſential to our happineſs; the moſt eſtimable men have known how to do without them, and to be content with little. Suppoſe thou haſt poſſeſſed them, and loſt them without any fault of thine own; is not this conſideration a great comfort. Perhaps their encreaſe would have corrupted the goodneſs of thy mind, or have awakened in it ſome evil propenſities. Suppoſe thou haſt enjoyed many conveniences of which thou art now deprived; happily they have never enervated thee; and as to the indiſpenſable neceſſaries of life, Providence will not withhold them from thee. Does not this ſoothing hope afford thee very great conſolation?

The tranquillity of mind which is produced by wiſe reflections, leads us to oppoſe to every diſagreeable impreſſion, the idea of ſome greater good. It is aſſuredly painful not to obtain the praiſe we deſerve; to loſe the good reputation our virtues have acquired us, by the calumnies and arts of men; to be expoſed to inſult and contempt after having had the ſatisfaction of being eſteemed. But how greatly is the bitterneſs of theſe privations mitigated by tranquillity of mind. "The loſs I have ſuſtained," thou wilt be apt to ſay to thyſelf, "is conſiderable." But after all it is only an exterior good, it is the echo of thy fame which is no longer heard; but it is itſelf ſtill in thy own power; it ſpeaks to thee from the bot-

tom of thy heart. Thou haſt loſt nothing of thy real excellence, having chiefly had in view the performance of thy duty, even though the whole world ſhould judge thee unfavourably. The approbation of men adds nothing to thy true greatneſs, neither can their blame diminiſh it. "From the "elevation of that place, to which thou haſt raiſed "thyſelf by thy virtues, look on thoſe arrows, dar- "ted againſt thee from thoſe founderies where ca- "lumny clings, ſee them fall without force at thy "feet. Elevate thyſelf ſtill higher and intrepidly "trample on them." *

Thy worth, or thine innocence, will not remain unknown to good men, and that eye which ſees all things remarks and appreciates thee, even though all the world ſhould miſconceive thy value. The moſt noble minded men deſpiſe the applauſe which fools have refuſed to them; and great minds have heard the railleries of folly, without diſcontinuing their tranquil progreſs in virtue. Follow their example, and feel the pleaſure of acting well, without being diſturbed by unjuſt reproach; in ſo doing conſiſts true greatneſs of ſoul. Would'ſt thou be that wretch who enjoys a reputation which he has not deſerved, who courts it meanly, and who ſhews a contemptible anxiety to preſerve it? What after all

* The French tranſlator ſuppoſes this to be a paſſage, taken from Young's writings.

is reputation? An uncertain and equivocal ſound, a vain phantom! What is a real object of ſhame? Vice. How can we overcome the fear of men? By fearing the Almighty. Take courage then, let duty make thee intrepid, do not ſhew any hatred againſt thoſe who calumniate, who ridicule, who inſult thee; avoid them from prudence, tire out their animoſity by thy benevolence, and force them to bluſh by thy wiſe and virtuous conduct. Pardon the injuries they do thee, and if thou canſt not ſecure thyſelf from them without having recourſe to legal protection, defend thy rights with moderation and without bitterneſs, againſt thoſe of whom thou haſt cauſe to complain. Thus it is that a noble tranquillity of mind ſupports us under the heavieſt calamities. It is certain, however, that this tranquillity of mind, cannot be at all times invariably the ſame; but it ſoon regains freſh ſtrength, though the weight of misfortune may ſometimes impair it. It may allow itſelf in the expreſſion of regret, but it will never be hurried into violence. Wiſdom and virtue always afford ſupport, and teach moderation in the midſt of the heavieſt afflictions.

This firm diſpoſition of mind in the midſt of long and great ſufferings, conſtitutes patience, which in the proſpect of a far ſuperior and endleſs felicity, gives us, even in our moſt painful diſtreſſes, the power of ſupporting them without murmuring. In-

ſtead of allowing ourſelves to indulge in any feelings of hatred towards men, or complaint againſt God, it leads us to acquieſce in the decrees of Providence, even ſo as to be thankfull, as for a benefit, for the trial to which it has ſeen fit to call us. If this diſpoſition of mind is called on to face dangers, it becomes intrepidity; and when we reſolve to expoſe ourſelves voluntarily to the evils of life, which the good of our ſouls makes it our duty to encounter, it becomes magnanimity, and finally heroiſm, when we triumph over the ordinary and natural apprehenſions of death, our moſt terrifying foe. Is not this diſpoſition of mind admirable, and can we poſſibly do without it? What throne is ſo elevated as to be ſecure from falling or receiving ſome ſhock? The moſt fortunate amongſt men today, may perhaps be the moſt unfortunate to-morrow. Does not our wealth often fall a prey to cunning or violence? May not a thouſand accidents, which we can neither foreſee nor prevent, ſnatch them from us? However powerful a monarch may be, can he be certain he has nothing to fear; have we not ſeen kings periſh in misfortunes, which they have long ſtruggled ineffectually to eſcape? How quickly the flower of youth fades under languor and ſickneſs! None of the agreeable circumſtances belonging to our outward condition are entirely in our own power; amongſt all the evils of life, there

is none we can conſider as far, ſtill leſs, for ever removed from us. Young people, allow me to recommend patience, as I am better acquainted with the viciſſitudes of life than you, and have endured them longer; arm yourſelves with patience from your earlieſt years. Learn from the ſlight contradictions you meet with in your younger days, to ſupport yourſelves under the more diſtreſſing ones, which you may, I might venture to ſay infallibly will, encounter in future life; from the labour your ſtudies may coſt you, learn to ſuſtain the burthen of the poſt which you may one day be called to fill; from the want of preſent conveniences, learn to endure more important privations which may await you in maturer age; from the little reſpect the narrowneſs of your fortune may acquire you in the world, which cannot be imputed to you as a fault, learn to riſe above the court that may be paid you, ſhould you obtain the goods of fortune, at ſome future period; and from the invectives any of your companions may utter privately againſt you in anger, learn not to be too ſenſibly affected by the bitter and unmerited reproaches you may be expoſed to in public. Learn from ſlight variations in your health to ſupport the total loſs of this bleſſing, perhaps prolonged by the languor of a conſtant valetudinary condition. What ſecurity have you, in fact, for the continuance of your health, even in its moſt flouriſhing ſtate, or that you ſhall long

preſerve it in full vigour? Learn from perceiving the reaſonable expectation you had indulged of having your application rewarded, which has been diſappointed, not to allow yourſelves to be overcome by finding that hope of ſome employment fallacious, which you expected to obtain in future life. Does every perſon of merit find himſelf in poſſeſſion of a ſuitable office the moment he deſires it? Study, then, to ſurmount thoſe obſtacles in yourſelves, which obſtruct you in the career of your duties, and which draw you aſide from the paths of induſtry and virtue; reſolve alſo to deſpiſe the railleries which a ſtrict attention to the performance of your duties may draw on you, and to hold in the ſame contempt, that approbation which you might obtain, by giving way to the vicious ſolicitations, and following the ſeducing examples of the vicious, however high their ſtation; ſtudy, I repeat it, from hence forward, to form your minds to that courage which you will hereafter find ſo neceſſary, when, being arrived at mature age, you may fill ſome place in ſociety, have to perform its duties, to defend the intereſts of religion and truth. Accuſtom yourſelves not to give way to any fear of men, neither to their flattering praiſes, nor to the menaces of the great ones of the earth; on the contrary, learn to triumph over whatever is moſt apt to create fear in life, by thinking that you are called to do ſo by duty. Be not diſcouraged if

in your early years you do not ſucceed according to your reaſonable wiſhes. "It is," ſays a ſacred writer, "good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*"

Tranquillity of mind raiſes us above many ſorrows, and ſerves as an antidote againſt the bitter events of life; but remember that it is the fruit of reflection, and of ſerious meditation. To attain it we muſt have frequently repreſented to ourſelves the ſmall value of corporeal advantages and the goods of fortune, and have freed our imaginations from the illuſions and falſe opinions which ſeduce them. This tranquillity of mind is alſo produced by the moderation of our deſires and paſſions. We muſt early acquire a habit of reſtraining our inclinations within the bounds of our real wants, to regulate them conformably to the end for which they have been impreſſed on our nature, and, on proper occaſions, to deny ourſelves even innocent and allowable gratifications. Tranquillity of mind and patience are formed by exerciſe; it is neceſſary we ſhould frequently have wiſhed to poſſeſs them; and that by following praiſe worthy reſolutions, we may daily ſtrive to acquire them; we muſt frequently have overcome a firſt emotion occaſioned by ſome misfortune, and by the aid of reaſon have appeaſed thoſe feelings of peeviſhneſs and ill humour to which we are ſo prone.

* Lament of Jerem. iii. v. 27.

The perſuaſion that advantages exiſt ſuperior to thoſe of which we are deprived, and the conſideration of the powerful aſſiſtance to which we can have recourſe in our troubles, is the chief ſource of tranquillity of mind. It is, therefore, incumbent on us to aſpire continually after the attainment of good inclinations, to fulfil all our duties, and to put a firm truſt in the protection of the arbiter of our deſtiny, ſo that the courageous expectation of an inevitable evil, may prepare us for it before it arrives, that an unſhaken reſolution may diſpoſe us to bear it with fortitude, and that an heroic patience may ſupport us under it, even during its moſt obſtinate and violent continuance. As it is religion eſpecially which preſcribes theſe virtues, from it alſo we derive the moſt powerful motives to the practice of them, in the promiſes of eternal felicity in a future ſtate. All the ſufferings of the preſent time, are but ſlight afflictions when compared with an eternity of happineſs, by one who already feels himſelf infinitely bleſſed, in the effect this divine perſuaſion operates on his mind by faith.

Finally, we ought frequently to recollect that the evils and inconveniences of life, have a ſalutary influence on our wiſdom and our virtue; that in general, thoſe who have been exerciſed by adverſity, are moſt uſeful and ready to aſſiſt others; that it is often more difficult to ſupport proſperity well than

adverſity; that it frequently happens that deep diſtreſſes lead us to a durable ſtate of felicity, in which we could not have maintained ourſelves with honour, had it not been preceded by theſe diſtreſſes. We muſt accuſtom ourſelves to recall often to our minds the ſmall value and uncertainty of all exterior advantages, and not to neglect thoſe leſs lively but more permanent pleaſures, which are independent of outward contingences, attainable in all ſituations, and calculated to confirm us in tranquillity of mind. There are many people who do not poſſeſs what is neceſſary to them, becauſe they will not wiſely make uſe of a ſmall advantage which is at their diſpoſal, and of which they might repeatedly renew the enjoyment; and alſo becauſe they diſdain and take no pains to procure to themſelves thoſe ſatisfactions which nature places equally within the reach of all men, to which all without exception have a right to pretend, and in which are to be found conſolations fitted to revive the heart which feels them, amidſt numberleſs trifling uneaſineſſes.

Enjoy the advantages granted thee by the Almighty, and endure chearfully the privation of thoſe he withholds. Each condition has its inconveniences. Would'ſt thou dare to think that God who is charity itſelf has forgotten thee? He beſtows more than we deſerve, and never what may be prejudicial to us.

TWENTIETH LESSON.

ON HUMILITY.

Such is the value and indiſpenſable neceſſity of this virtue, that without it there exiſts no real merit, nor true peace of mind, even were it poſſible to re-unite all good qualities independent of humility. Without humility there is no truth in us, this virtue having for its baſis a juſt knowledge of ourſelves, of other men, and of the being who is the fource of all perfection, the principle of our exiſtence and of our preſervation in every moment of our lives. Oppoſed to humility is pride, its greateſt enemy; which terms it meanneſs and forgetfulneſs of our dignity; inſulting it in reproachful terms, though frequently not without wiſhing to find it in every other perſon. In fact, with whatever complacency pride conſiders its own preſumption, it hates to find it in others; and notwithſtanding all the ridicule it endeavours to throw on humility and modeſty, it frequently at-

taches itſelf to modeſt perſons, and feels at eaſe in their ſociety. It is a certain proof that humility is an excellent virtue, ſince it is ſought even by its greateſt enemy; and that pride is diſguſting even to thoſe in whoſe character it predominates, ſince they cannot endure it in others. From this remark ariſes the reaſon given why the majority of mankind are proud, and the leſſer number humble. It is, that feeling ourſelves to love humility in others, we flatter ourſelves that we poſſeſs it; and as we hate pride out of ourſelves, we fancy we hate it in ourſelves alſo. It is impoſſible from inward conviction, not to own that humility is the ſoul of all the virtues; we wiſh to poſſeſs it; but the miſchief is, that inſtead of cultivating it in our hearts, we content ourſelves with merely allowing it the approbation of our underſtanding. We cannot, however, diſown that pride is a very deceitful inclination, we declaim againſt it when we perceive it in others, prudently repreſs its ſallies, whether in words or outward demonſtrations, that it may not be perceived in our own conduct, and we fancy we have conquered it in reality.

But what is this amiable virtue, this humility? Perhaps it conſiſts in a juſt ſenſe of our weakneſs; the low opinion we entertain of our merit and powers; or the ſincere value we ſet on the talents we perceive in others. If it is nothing more, it is far

from being the firm baſis of virtue; theſe ſentiments may be produced by natural temper, ſecret pride, or at moſt, may be only a ſtrong effort of reaſon. It is poſſible to think unfavourably of our own talents, and very advantageouſly of thoſe poſſeſſed by others, becauſe we do not juſtly appreciate the one or the other; This is not humility but want of judgment. It is poſſible to form a juſt eſtimate of our own good qualities and defects, not to attribute to ourſelves merit we do not poſſeſs, to own our faults and imperfections, and endeavour to correct them, yet to be vain of theſe very qualities. We may make a juſt compariſon of ourſelves with others, weigh their talents and advantages equitably with our own, perceive and acknowledge wherein they excell us, ſhew them all due reſpect and eſteem, and not have, however, the leſs pride in our hearts, in regard to ſome other advantages we may really poſſeſs. Our talents are ſo various, and ſo different in degree, that we readily admit the pre-eminence of another, in certain caſes, at the ſame time that we ſet forth ſome of our own advantages in oppoſition to theſe, which appear to us a compenſation; or we voluntarily yield to another, a higher degree of merit, whilſt our own appears to us of no leſs value, conſidering the particular circumſtances in which each of us were placed. Crito determines equitably that Cleon poſſeſſes great depth of genius, and eſteems

this quality in him; "but he has not however," ſays he to himſelf, "that quickneſs of underſtanding in which I am ſo ſuperior, and which procures me admiration." Crito is right, but he is proud of his quickneſs of underſtanding, at the very moment that he feels an humble ſenſe of Cleon's ſuperior depth of genius. He alſo has a juſt idea of his own ſpecies of underſtanding, he acknowledges that Marcus poſſeſſes a warmth of imagination far beyond his; he does him juſtice in this reſpect, and only values himſelf on his quick and delicate kind of underſtanding. Moreover, it is poſſible to conſider our talents, powers, and virtues, which we eſtimate properly, as ſo many gifts from God, and yet be vain of them. Few carry folly ſo far as to think they derive their talents and faculties from themſelves. Lelius owns that he derives from God that eloquence by which he is diſtinguiſhed, "but as God has thus favoured me more than others," ſays he to himſelf, "I certainly poſſeſs a great advantage. Did not God foreſee, that I ſhould make a laudable uſe of this diſtinguiſhed capacity; was not this the motive which induced him to beſtow the gift?" You ſee Lelius conſiders his eloquence as a gift from God, but he is not the leſs diſpoſed to dwell with complacency on all the application he has uſed, in acquiring the graces of elocution, in attending to all

the rules relative to the art of ſpeaking (concerning which he has with much pains gained a competent knowledge), to all the divers examples he has collected, from the peruſal of the orations of ancient and modern orators, and which he has by reflection appropriated to himſelf. He alſo dwells with complacency on thoſe endeavours accompanied by the ſacrifice of his repoſe, and many of the comforts and conveniences of life, by which he has attained that eloquence which has procured him ſuch great preſent advantages; reckoning up alſo at the ſame time thoſe which may reſult from it, by its influence on the virtue and good taſte of future generations. Thus he offers incenſe to his own vanity in regard to his eloquence, and whilſt he acknowledges having received this ſuperior talent from God, he flatters himſelf that he is more deſerving of the favour conferred than any other perſon. Far from being humble, he is really proud.

We may alſo from precipitation, or error in judgment, fail in the juſt eſtimation of our own good qualities and thoſe of others, without being at all the more humble by ſo doing.

Theſe reflections may ſuffice to diſcover to us the nature and excellence of true humility. The humble man is he who conſiders his talents, whether ſmall or great, as gifts from God, totally unmerited and gratuitous; who uſes and improves them

as ſuch, and ſtudies to diſcover his own faults and imperfections.

In this view, humility has charms in the eyes of men, and even in the ſight of God, which render it worthy of being ranked firſt amongſt the virtues. It is a conſtantly ſubſiſting gratitude towards God. It is attended by a ſenſe of our own failings and defects; excites a zeal in us to neglect no means of becoming better; and inſpires us with indulgence, patience, and condeſcenſion, in regard to the imperfections of others. It makes us uſe our talents the more laudably, in as much as it refers them with homage to the creator, from whom it acknowledges them to be ſolely derived. They are ſo many gifts from God which, in that reſpect, humility highly values in others, as well as thoſe talents which itſelf poſſeſſes; but by conſidering them as wholly unmerited, it is guarded againſt all ſelf complacency; and the perſuaſion it feels that the beſt uſe that can be made of them is at all times very defective, is a ſtill further preſervative againſt all pride in the poſſeſſion. "What ſhould I be," ſays the wiſe, virtuous, and humble man to himſelf, however great his degree of virtue and wiſdom, and to whatever rank or fortune ſtrenuous efforts on his p[illegible] may have raiſed him, "what ſhould I be, had "I not been endued with capacity? If I have im-

" proved it, how little merit have I in ſo doing, when
" I deduct what I owe to education, to the advan-
" tageous circumſtances of the family I was born in,
" to the friends I have had the good fortune to pro-
" cure, to the conſtant health I have enjoyed, and
" to all the outward circumſtances which were not
" under my direction? From whence had I theſe
" aſſiſtances and happy opportunities? To whom do
" I owe my diſpoſition to ſtudy, my inclination to
" undertake and perſevere in it; and who has main-
" tained in me the will to do right, and the capaci-
" ty to diſtinguiſh what is beſt to be done? Do I
" derive all this from myſelf? What are my ſitua-
" tion, my fortune, and all the advantages I poſſeſs?
" Gifts which I have not merited. O God! to
" whom I owe all that I poſſeſs, preſerve me from
" pride and preſumption."

Humility cannot be ſeparated from truſt in Providence, and from a ſentiment of love to God, which cauſes it to be attended with joy, as well as with ſerious reflection. If humility makes us bluſh on taking a view of our various faults, and of the qualities in which we are excelled by others, this ſhame is tempered by the ſerenity which reſults from a good conſcience. The ſame humility which makes us feel our imperfections, decides at the ſame time on what we may juſtly and with ſatisfaction value ourſelves. Humility does not forbid us the juſt

ſenſe of whatever is good in us, it only oppoſes an improper ſelf love. The more it reminds us of what we are, and of that in which we are defective, the more it animates us to correct and improve ourſelves. By humbling it elevates us, whereas pride lowers us by a deceitful elevation. As humility points out God to us as the univerſal ſource of every good and perfect gift, it diſcovers to us the malignity of envy, which is nothing but diſcontent with the lot Providence has beſtowed on us. By removing from our minds the flattering imagination of our own ſuperior merit, it frees us from numberleſs mortifications occaſioned by pride, which leads us to pretend to an eſteem and conſideration, proportionable to the high opinion it gives us of ourſelves, and which others are well pleaſed to withhold from us. Pride is an impudent beggar who craves demonſtrations of deference, and who, frequently repulſed, exclaims againſt unjuſt treatment; or if any thing is granted, thinks it is by no means what is equal to its deſerts. Humility, like a modeſt beauty, is always more diſtinguiſhed than it ſuppoſes itſelf to deſerve, and obtains a degree of eſtimation far beyond its hopes. It can ſeldom be diſſatisfied, as it is wholly void of pretenſions.

The greateſt part of our diſcontent ariſes from the proud opinion that we are not ſo happy as we deſerve to be. From how many torments and anxie-

ties ſhould we be delivered by humility, which would baniſh from our minds this erroneous opinion. Thus, in relation to our fortune, œconomy is ſaid to be the beſt revenue, the ſame may be ſaid of humility, in regard to our peace of mind. It teaches us to be ſatisfied with little, the more ſo as this little is not entirely our due; and receives the overplus with ſo much the more ſatisfaction, as it is leſs inclined to conſider it as a recompence due to its merit. Pride, on the contrary, creates to itſelf a thouſand fantaſtical wants which it cannot ſatisfy. It has never a ſufficient degree of fortune or health, it is never ſufficiently eſteemed, nor ever treated with the affection it thinks its due. Humility oppoſes this fooliſh deſire, which is nouriſhed by our idolizing attachment to ourſelves, and this makes the humble heart tranquil and happy.

Humility has a marvellous influence on our conduct in ſociety; it makes us affable, and diſpoſed to oblige, whilſt pride ſhews itſelf equally actuated by ſelf love, and by indifference and contempt for others. Humility readily brings itſelf to the level of thoſe who are inferior, eſteems their moſt trifling good qualities, and places others on a footing with itſelf, by forgetting its own ſuperiority, or by tempering its ſplendour with modeſty, ſo as never to allow it to wound the feelings of any perſon whatever. It makes uſe of its ſuperior powers with gratitude to

God, to whom it refers all its glory; and far from being oſtentatious, the weakeſt genius is never expoſed by it to the mortification of being made ſenſible of its own deficiencies; it even helps thoſe of inferior underſtandings to form opinions at which they themſelves are ſurpriſed. It ſees with indulgence the faults of others, having always its own before its eyes; and eſteems the ſmalleſt advantages poſſeſſed by others, as gifts beſtowed on them by God himſelf. It remarks ſomething in every one's character to their advantage, becauſe it judges equitably, to which, not being prevented by ſelf love, it yields the ſuperiority. It never aſpires to appear in ſociety other than it is; without being anxious to obtain a pre-eminence, it acts with a noble frankneſs, and being moderately occupied with its own concerns, is the more diſpoſed to attend to thoſe of others. But pride is a moſt troubleſome companion. It is perpetually wounded and mortified, and being ſo, it contracts a degree of ill temper which it infuſes into ſociety from a ſpirit of revenge. The humble man furniſhes no occaſion of diſſatisfaction to others; and as it is ſeldom that his modeſt pretenſions to eſteem are wounded, he is always on friendly terms with thoſe with whom he aſſociates. No one's ſociety is more agreeable than that of a perſon who, to great merit, unites much humility. This virtue takes from merit that impoſing

air, that tone and language, which is with ſo much difficulty endured in ſociety. It is true, a perſon may artfully put on an appearance of modeſty, but the diſguiſe is ſoon ſeen through, however ably it may be adopted. On the other hand, when modeſty exiſts in the heart, it imperceptibly, and on all occaſions, communicates to our outward actions the charm belonging to it, makes the ſlighteſt ſervice of friendſhip and ſocial intercourſe appear great, by the manner in which it is performed, and encreaſes the value of the greateſt, by its attention to keep the importance of it from appearing too ſtrongly to the perſon who receives it. Caprice in ſocial intercourſe, which generally accompanies pride, is never to be found united with humility, which is the more pleaſing to us from not exacting thoſe deferences to which it might have a right to pretend. The modeſt and humble man may make himſelf much more uſeful than another by the qualities of his underſtanding, or the advantages of fortune, by which he is diſtinguiſhed; the ignorant are willingly inſtructed by him, becauſe he inſtructs without the oſtentation of ſuperior knowledge; the vicious willingly receive his advice, becauſe he tempers the harſhneſs of cenſure with affability. Modeſt merit excites confidence; we diſtruſt that merit which is accompanied by pride; modeſt merit makes its way with great and ſmall; that which is attended with pride diſ-

dains the approach of its inferiors, and is entirely excluded from acceſs to its ſuperiors. The humble man's merit engages our imitation, whereas the overbearing diſpoſition of pride, ſets us againſt merit itſelf. Oppreſſed innocence does not hide itſelf from one whoſe aſſiſtance it can hope to receive without humiliation; and haughty vice will always prefer receiving relief from the perſons who make it feel their ſuperiority the leaſt. Humility affords us the moſt certain means of acquiring the eſteem of the wiſe, the affection of the worthy, and even, as has been already remarked, the approbation of the preſumptuous. If our merit is ſmall, pride will reduce it to nothing, whilſt humility will give it luſtre. If our merit is great, pride will lower it, whereas humility will gain it more eſteem, and raiſe this eſteem even to admiration.

Suppoſing theſe reflections juſt, what a treaſure to the ſoul is humility! All things concur to make it beloved and ſought after. It is cheriſhed by heaven and earth; reaſon and religion approve and preſcribe it. It eſtabliſhes peace in the heart and gives luſtre to its virtues. It excites us conſtantly to become better, by not allowing us to attribute to ourſelves an imaginary value. It influences the good and comfort of ſociety in the moſt advantageous manner. It makes our merit more eſtimable, our faults more deſerving of indulgence. It makes our

good qualities more uſeful to others, and theirs more advantageous and agreeable to us. It rewards us not only becauſe it conveys a pleaſing ſenſation to our hearts, but alſo by the approbation, the love, the eſteem, and the admiration it procures us from others.

Heaven, earth, reaſon, and religion unite againſt pride. Every thing declares it to be a lie, an uſurpation, a folly, and a torment. It corrupts the heart, ſtifles reaſon, diſturbs our own repoſe, and the peace of ſociety. It injures our powers, and prevents our improving them to the degree we ought. Reaſon denominates it an inſurrection againſt truth, and religion a revolt againſt the Almighty. Pride alone would prove the corruption of human nature, did no other proof of it exiſt. How can it ſubſiſt in a creature who does not owe its exiſtence to itſelf, nor is capable of preſerving it? Who can no more derive from itſelf the power of moving a hand or a finger, than it can direct the courſe of the ſtars. Muſt not this paſſion be a tare ſown in the heart of man by his great enemy? In as much as humility is an excellent virtue, pride is a deteſtable vice; how happens it, nevertheleſs, that we have ſuch a propenſity to pride, and that we find it ſo difficult to be humble? One of the maxims of Rochefoucault, though it ſeems like a paradox, is in fact true, it is thus expreſſed; "many are willing to be

devout, but no one chuſes to be humble." It is difficult to explain how we can be unwilling to acknowledge, that with regard to the poſſeſſion and preſervation of our faculties, we are entirely dependent on God, at the ſame time, that we cannot but acknowledge that we hold our exiſtence from him. It is doubtleſs this ſame pride, ſo natural to us, which is one of the ſtrongeſt reaſons why ſo many who are puffed up with it, hate or deſpiſe the Chriſtian religion. This religion ſtrips us of our own merit, of our pretended excellence and righteouſneſs, teaching us that the glory we aſpire to, does not belong to us; that we are ſinners, unable by our own ſtrength to forſake our ſins, and obtain our own ſanctification; that in order to our ſalvation we ſtand in need of a divine juſtice imputed to us by grace. The proud man deſires to ſave himſelf by his own works, and to earn the felicity of heaven by painful obſervances, rather than humbly to have recourſe to juſtification by faith, and conſequently to obtain ſalvation as an undeſerved and gratuitous gift from God. Let every one examine his own heart to be convinced how much pride is humiliated by this doctrine. Pride would frequently rather be deprived of life, than have its errors, its fooliſh actions, its faults, its trifling and unworthy inclinations, its baſe views, and its hidden deſigns, known to the world; yet ſuch a man idolizes himſelf. He

would be ſhocked that any one ſhould know even a part of his imperfections, and all the falſe glare of his pride, which nevertheleſs leads him to pretend to a tribute of univerſal reſpect and admiration. If he conſulted reaſon ever ſo little, he would comprehend that this pride, ſo frequently inſpired by birth, riches, beauty, ſtrength, the advantages inherited by anceſtors, is the moſt unfounded claim for the deſire of glory; however, by this pride is engendered and nouriſhed in the heart. Pride is not confined to little minds and frivolous underſtandings; it ſlips into thoſe of a ſuperior caſt and which think nobly. An act of uncommon virtue often gives birth to pride, and the moſt pious ſentiment, the moſt complete victory over a vicious paſſion, a ſervice performed to ſociety in the nobleſt manner, makes us take a ſecret pride in ourſelves, and deify in our hearts thoſe acts of virtue as juſt ſubjects of ſelf eſteem. A pious man was in the habit of ſaying, "I am more apprehenſive on account of my virtues, than of my faults and my ſins; the firſt eaſily betray me into pride, the laſt bring me back to humility." Let us then be particularly on our guard againſt the pride inſpired by virtue, but which alſo goeth before deſtruction.* Let us meditate deeply on this ſalutary precept of Jeſus Chriſt; "when ye ſhall have done all thoſe things which are command-

* Prov. xvi. 18. v.

ed you, say we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which it was our duty to do."* "If we derive our reward from pride, what recompence have we to expect from God, who has made you to differ from another. What have you that you have not received, and if you have received, wherefore do you glory in it, as if you had not received it?"† By what philosopher was pride ever so effectually refuted as by this humble apostle. However, our good works are not without their value, even according to the evangelical doctrines, though they do not communicate any pretensions to merit which can be urged in the sight of God. "Who ever said, or heard," as Luther expresses himself on this subject, "that good works are nothing?" I would not give up one of my sermons, one of my public lessons, one of my writings, no, not one of the most insignificant works I have ever performed, or may perform, for all this world could offer. I value them more than life, though life is more precious than any other possession; for if what I have performed is a good work, it is God who has performed it by me, and in me. And though by no such good work I can justify myself, (which can only be done by the redemption and grace of Jesus Christ, which can alone procure our justification,) yet being performed to the praise and glory of God, with a view of being useful to the

* Luke xvii. 10. v. † 1 Cor. ix. 7.

ſalvation of our neighbour, it becomes by this double intention, beyond compariſon more valuable than all the treaſures of the world. In what, then, does the true dignity of man conſiſt—moſt aſſuredly in humility.

What conſtitutes true human glory, the glory of the wiſe? The knowledge of himſelf and of his own nothingneſs; this inward conviction, which ariſes in the bottom of his heart, all that I am, all that I poſſeſs, I do not hold from myſelf; whatever I have received I will enjoy with gratitude, contemplate it each day with ſatisfaction, and uſe it without thinking I have any way deſerved it. If, O man! thou art deaf to this voice, bow thyſelf down, fall proſtrate in the duſt, declaim on the vanity of every thing human; even in the duſt thou wilt nouriſh the groſſeſt pride!

TWENTY-FIRST LESSON.

ON UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE, ON TRUST IN GOD, AND RESIGNATION TO HIS WILL.

To conclude what remains to be ſaid on the mental advantages eſſential to our felicity, we will ſpeak, in the firſt place, of univerſal benevolence, and, ſecondly, of truſt in God and reſignation to his will, as being qualities of the heart, abſolutely neceſſary to our happineſs.

ON UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE.

This benevolence conſiſts in a ſincere and effectual deſire to procure, as much as in us lies, the happineſs of all the intelligent creatures on earth, as having one common origin with them, and being equally the object of God's love, which extends to the whole human race.

However this propenſity may be weakened, it certainly ſubſiſts in ſome degree in every heart. We feel ourſelves inclined to ſerve others, independent of any perſonal intereſt. We cannot help approving and eſteeming in them, the noble diſpoſitions to benevolence, and thoſe actions by which they are manifeſted, even when no poſſible advantage can ariſe from them to ourſelves. We experience a compoſure, a ſecret and ſatisfactory approbation of heart, when we have contributed to the happineſs of others, though by the loſs of ſome advantage; when we have ſaved them from ſome danger by expoſing ourſelves, ſoftened their pains and troubles by our attentions, by our labours, and by the ſacrifice of ſome comfort of our own. The more diſintereſtedneſs we remark in the benefactors of mankind, the more efforts of genius, the more fatigues and ſacrifices it has coſt them, the more they have appeared to have had the advantage of others ſolely in view; and the greater the number of thoſe to whoſe ſervice they have devoted themſelves, the more meritorious and worthy of affection will they be. We naturally feel equal contempt for one who ſeems to have laid aſide every ſentiment of humility; and who, entirely abſorbed in himſelf, is inſenſible to the happineſs and misfortunes of others, even though they ſhould be inhabitants of another country or lived in another age. All this proves, that univer-

ſal benevolence is a propenſity in uniſon with the very eſſence of our ſouls, in which it has been implanted by our creator himſelf.

We may ſtrengthen and improve this moral ſenſe in ourſelves, by the aſſiſtance of reaſon and practice. We may and ought to convince ourſelves of the great advantages derived to ſociety from this virtue, and how agreeable it is to God. We may apply it in a prudent and reaſonable manner to the general and particular good of thoſe with whom we live or may live, and according to the different relations they bear to us, by birth, ſituation, and other particular circumſtances in life. This wiſdom, this prudence is requiſite in the exerciſe of univerſal benevolence, if we wiſh to enter into its views.

Every man has the ſame pretenſions we have to happineſs, and is our equal as to his primary and fundamental conſtitution. There exiſt for him mental and corporeal advantages, advantages which affect his life, advantages which affect his reputation, or in which he has a property. The intereſt we take in his happineſs muſt ſhew itſelf relatively to theſe advantages; by a ſincere endeavour to procure them for him, to ſecure to him their poſſeſſion, or to improve them for him, according to his neceſſities, or in proportion to his capacity of enjoyment.

This inclination to promote the happineſs of others, may be exerciſed in various ways, ſometimes

by our advice, our encouragement, our good offices, or even by our example; ſometimes by pecuniary aſſiſtance, or by recommendations to others; ſometimes by the ſacrifice of our health and of our life, if conducive to the general good.

True univerſal benevolence, ought, therefore, to be a ſincere inclination to make others happy, not from intereſted motives, of ſelf love, and vain glory, but, as with all other virtues, from a principle of reſpect and love towards the common father of the human race. It ſhould be a lively diſpoſition, animating us at all times to undertake and execute whatever may be for the advantage of mankind, and which ſhould be ſupported againſt all obſtacles, by the hope of obtaining the bleſſing of God, in this world and the next. A ſimple natural emotion is not ſufficient to effect this; wiſdom and prudence muſt regulate us conformably to our faculties and to the wants of others.

Theſe general reflections may direct us in determining the different duties of univerſal benevolence, and in tracing its character.

The friend of mankind feels a benevolent deſire to be with regard to others, as much as his imperfect nature will permit, what God is in regard to all his reaſonable creatures; to repreſent him on earth, as much as poſſible, by his application of thoſe talents with which he has been entruſted, for the pur-

poſe of promoting his own happineſs and that of others. Full of reſpect and gratitude towards God, he wiſhes to ſee all men happy, as much as may be conſiſtent with the plan of the Supreme Being. He endeavours not only to do to others exactly to the letter of what the law commands, and, conſequently, to be juſt; but, what is more, he is at all times ready to do ſervices to thoſe who have no poſitive claim to them, and thus practiſes the duty of equity. As this univerſal benevolence might be carried to exceſs and become weakneſs of heart, he reſtrains it by obſerving what he owes to certain perſons or to himſelf, and by the love he has for God, which prevails over every other affection; ſo that he unites wiſdom and prudence with beneficence. He comprehends that he cannot poſſibly benefit every one equally, but that his obligation on this account is determined by the difference which exiſts between the wants, the circumſtances, and the merit of each. Far from confining himſelf to wiſhing and promoting in a general manner the good of others, he is even diſpoſed to put himſelf to inconvenience to ſerve them, and thus becomes a uſeful man, accuſtomed to do good, not by chance, but with the views requiſite to make himſelf uſeful, and in regard to as many perſons as his circumſtances, his faculties, and his other duties will permit. He does not defer doing good till he is ſolicited; he ſeizes

and even anticipates occaſions of being uſeful. With the ſame ſincerity with which he intereſts himſelf in the happineſs of others, he is touched with compaſſion for their diſtreſſes, and diſpoſed to aſſiſt them to the utmoſt of his ability; to ſoften their griefs by his conſolation and by teſtimonies of attachment, without excepting even thoſe who have made themſelves unhappy by their own fault, ſeeing the Almighty treats even the wicked with compaſſion.

Wiſdom and virtue being the chief good of man, the principal care of the friend of mankind, is to labour at maintaining and extending it more and more, throughout the earth. His inſtructions are given with prudence and modeſty, his advice with a kind and wiſe condeſcenſion; he tempers his cenſures and his commands with entreaties; and he ſtrives at all times, in every part of his conduct and in his private connections, to inſtruct without pride, and tacitly by his example; ſo that his life may in ſome ſort be a ſtriking commentary on the precepts of wiſdom and virtue. As he would think it a crime to deprive any one of their fortune, ſo he conſiders it as ſtill more culpable to introduce error into the mind of another, or to deprive his heart of virtue and innocence by his own conduct. The friend of mankind intereſts himſelf in their life and health. He not only avoids doing any thing which may ſhorten the one or injure the other; he even points

out and provides means for their preſervation, aſſiſts them with his ſuperfluity, prevents their negligence, oppoſes their idleneſs, their paſſions and their vices, enemies the moſt dangerous to health and life. If their life is in danger he takes care of it, aſſiſts and encourages the ſick; he is eyes to the blind, feet and hands to the lame; or he contrives that they ſhall be leſs deſtitute of ſuccour, that they ſhall be leſs ſenſible of their afflictions; and that, inſtead of aggravating their diſtreſſes by fretting and murmuring, they ſhould raiſe their minds continually to God, to behold in contemplating his providence whatever can eſtabliſh their tranquillity. Envying no one, what is their own property, how can he ever withhold it fraudulently? Could he poſſibly prove unfaithful in the diſcharge of a ſtipulated ſalary, in the reſtitution of any thing committed to his truſt, in returning whatever he may have found belonging to another, in adminiſtering the public money with integrity, according to its deſtination? Would he practiſe even the moſt delicate and allowed artifice, in the ordinary concerns of life, in matters of contract and buſineſs? He would ſhudder at the bare idea, and always conducts himſelf towards others, as he would wiſh them to conduct themſelves towards him on ſimilar occaſions. He is at all times careful of the honour and reputation of others. He teſtifies to every one with propriety, the eſteem he has for

them. Attentive to diſcover merit, and to ſeek after it, he brings it into notice, and honours it wherever he finds it; he furniſhes to all who want his aid, as far as he can, the means of improving their talents, their capacities, their virtues, and thereby of encreaſing their reputation, and rendering it ſolid and durable. He oppoſes calumny, and hides whatever faults in others he is not called upon by duty to diſcover. If he has been miſtaken in any judgment he has formed, or done any one an injury by ſpeaking haſtily, he is as eager to make reparation in this caſe, as he would be had he injured any one in their fortunes. Careful to avoid taking up ill founded ſuſpicions, his univerſal benevolence leads him to think the beſt he can of every one, till he evidently ſees cauſe to change his opinion. Conſtantly attentive to the regard and teſtimonies of reſpect he owes to others in their preſence, he is equally ſo in ſpeaking of them when abſent, and ever ready to defend courageouſly the character likely to be blackened by falſe imputations. As all mankind form in his eye one large family, whoſe common father is God, he ſtudies to conduct himſelf towards all the members of which it is compoſed, with ſincerity, truth, diſcretion, modeſty, moderation, affability, friendſhip, a love of peace, and with charity towards his enemies.

It is clear that this univerſal benevolence is the

portion of noble natures, and of inestimable value. What proves indisputably, that a great part of our destination on earth, is to perform acts of benevolence is, that they contribute to our own happiness and that of others; that they encrease our inward tranquillity; and that they cannot but please that being who sees all things, since they carry with them such a charm and dignity in the eyes of all the intelligent and good.

I must here make a fresh observation to the honour of religion. This friend of mankind whom reason honours with approbation, whom the heart seeks and longs to meet with, whom the desire of the public good leads us to wish for, and whom the morality of the ancients neither formed nor was acquainted with; this man is the production of the wisdom and efficacy of religion, which forms him to faith and the love of God; and by the means of both these, to universal benevolence. The most perfect christian would be the most charitable, the most useful, the most modest, the most affable, the most compassionate, and the most peaceable of men; and in consequence of all these qualities, the most agreeable in the social intercourse of life. He will be in reality what the polite part of the world endeavours to appear; he will attract the approbation of men, of angels, and of God. His particular talents, whether natural or ac-

quired, his knowledge of arts and ſciences, will receive luſtre and embelliſhment from the meritorious character of being the friend of mankind. If this is certainly true, as cannot be doubted, how precious ought that religion to be to us, whoſe precepts not only breathe nothing but charity and benevolence, but which alſo communicates this ſpirit to our hearts; which preſents to us in the perſon of our Savour, the moſt perfect example of charity; which it animates us to imitate by motives, far ſuperior to thoſe with which we are furniſhed by reaſon. Does it not, in fact, aſſure us that God, the Supreme Being, will give us credit for even the ſlighteſt good offices of true charity that we perform; and will conſider the good we do to thoſe who ſuffer, and eſpecially to the virtuous, as done to himſelf? What, can our beneficence extend even to God? What a glorious idea for man, what an encouragement to chriſtian charity!

TRUST IN GOD AND RESIGNATION TO HIS WILL.

Moderation and a command over our deſires, tranquillity of mind and patience in adverſity, humility of heart, even when it is upright, and univerſal benevolence, contribute much to the contentment, of which we become continually more and more deſirous. But this contentment muſt ever remain

doubtful and imperfect. For what is the virtuous man, however cautiously he may tread the path of life? A weak being, who has no ſtrength of his own; though he has many obſtacles to overcome, which oppoſe themſelves to his tranquillity. His beſt intentions often fail of ſucceſs, or ſucceed in a very different way from what he intended. His underſtanding is often perplexed, and fails him at the moment when he moſt ſtands in need of it. His moſt flattering hopes vaniſh, and his moſt lawful wiſhes meet with diſappointment. To-day he ſurmounts ſome obſtacles, to-morrow he is threatened with freſh difficulties. His tranquillity is at length impaired, and his patience worne out by the weight of theſe afflictions. See him ſtruggling with poverty. His ſituation improves, and he enjoys a greater ſhare of tranquillity. Soon, however, his mind is diſturbed by freſh alarms; he has a formidable foe to combat, which he had no right to expect—reproach, unmerited reproach. His very virtues frequently draw on him theſe evils. He ſerves others and is repaid with ingratitude; he is ſincere and his ſincerity occaſions his misfortunes; he diſdains the baſe means which ſometimes lead to fortune, and he remains in obſcurity; he is ſuppoſed not to have a capacity to enable him to riſe in the world, becauſe he will not make his way by cringing; his pacific temper expoſes him to affronts from ſenſeleſs

perſons, who feel no apprehenſion of his taking any revenge. He is zealous to repreſs the diſorders in his family, or to reſtrain thoſe who attack the public good; and vice thus chaſtiſed, revenges itſelf by raiſing up continual vexations to torment him. His own faults alſo give him uneaſineſs; he ſees that his progreſs in virtue is ſlow and unſteady. He laments a failure, it leads him to be more circumſpect, and ſoon after he fails again. In the beginning of the day, he forms the moſt laudable reſolutions, and at night he perceives he has executed them moſt imperfectly. In retirement, where nothing diſturbs him, he reflects wiſely; but this wiſdom often forſakes him in the tumult of the world. He flatters himſelf, he has triumphed over ſome evil inclination; it did but ſleep, and wakes again on the firſt opportunity that offers. He thought he had conquered ſome vain imagination, and preſently finds it ſeducing him under another form. He gains a command over his ſenſes, yet they frequently ſhake off his authority, and light up the flame of paſſion, ſooner than reaſon can extinguiſh it. His noble mode of thinking, his lively conviction of right, the ſentiments of generoſity which prevailed in his mind before he ſat down to table, are often totally changed when he quits it. A word, a look, a trifle, frequently change his diſpoſitions, weaken in his mind the conviction of duty, and of the excel-

lence of virtue. He has the inward conviction of right intentions, it is true, but he has alſo that of having neglected the good he might have done. Humility ſerves him as a ſhield againſt pride, and he often becomes proud of his humility. He guards again ſelf intereſt, which, however, frequently ſteals into his beſt actions and abuſes them. He moderates his attachment to life, and nevertheleſs the ſweet ties of friendſhip, of conjugal and parental love, captivate his mind and make him dread death.

If this is the true deſcription of the moſt virtuous of men, another quality beſides thoſe of the heart already mentioned, is eſſential to him; a quality which muſt form the more ſolid baſis to his ſafety and tranquillity, I mean, a lively truſt in Providence, and entire reſignation to all its decrees. Without this virtue, tranquillity of mind, patience and courage in adverſity, are only the fruits of prudence produced by the aſſiſtance of art. They ſink immediately, or in a very ſhort time, arrive at all the maturity of which they are capable. They muſt derive their ſtrength from confidence in Providence, and a noble reſolution to reſign to that without exception, every event of our lives. Faith in God, the ſublime thought that God governs and regulates the general and particular deſtiny of man, that his decrees are thoſe of infinite wiſdom, of unbounded goodneſs and holineſs, that they are dictated by the de-

ſire of making us happy, even when they contradict our wiſhes; this ſublime thought reduced to conviction and feeling, is a divine conſolation to the heart, and a ſource of tranquillity in ſufferings and afflictions, as well as in the moſt fortunate events. However happy thou mayeſt be, O man! if thou ceaſeſt to keep this in mind, thy proſperity will make thee preſumptuous, and the fear of loſing it will drive thee to deſpair. Does thy happineſs depend alone on thy care, on thy power, and on thy prudence? Ah! tremble in the expectation of evils which thou canſt not avoid, of the inſults and violence of men, from which thou canſt not eſcape.

What is it, then, that can inſure me againſt all the accidents which threaten my fortune? Faith in that powerful God who diſpoſes of it. He will preſerve it to me as long as his wiſdom ſees good, and that I do not precipitate myſelf into diſtreſs. He is God. But ſuppoſing me to be in real danger of ſome misfortune; whence ſhall I get courage to ſupport it? In the thought that God who governs the world, directs all things with wiſdom and goodneſs. Muſt I be deprived of ſome part of the good I enjoy; his will be done! He is my God, I am his creature. My happineſs changes into miſery, I ſuffer, and my ſufferings encreaſe with my adverſity. The tranquillity of my mind is ſhaken, how ſhall I ſtrengthen it? By fortifying myſelf in the perſuaſion that God

who directs all things, knows my ſuffering ſtate, and that his wiſdom has ordained it. He is all powerful, why ſhould I be anxious? He is charity, to his will I reſign myſelf. But the continuance of my ſufferings wears out my patience; how ſhall I revive and ſtrengthen it? By confidence in the father of ſpirits. He cannot abandon the virtuous man, and thou art an object of his love. How imperfect, however, is my virtue! Can I indulge a hope that ſuch feeble virtue can be acceptable to God? Yes, he is no leſs good than holy. Be aſſured he will extend to thee a paternal forgiveneſs. He attends to thy heart, to the uprightneſs of thy intention, to whatever oppoſes the obedience thou ſtriveſt to pay him. Compoſe thy mind, therefore, and be humble. God loves virtue and ſupports it. Thou art, it is true, in danger, in frequent danger, of offending againſt virtue; watch over its preſervation, truſt in the Supreme Being and implore his aſſiſtance. He is preſent every where, he is in you. He who has him for his protector, ought not to loſe courage, to whatever temptation he may be expoſed.

Confidence in God frees us from a thouſand other anxious cares. "Be faithful and pious," ſays the righteous man to himſelf, "and leave the reſt to Providence!" This will diſpel thy gloomy apprehenſions, and afford thee comfort in affliction. Such

afflictions as thou has not brought on thyſelf, ariſe by the direction of God. Wait patiently, and thou wilt ſee that they turn out to thy real advantage. They are ſalutary though bitter remedies, which contribute to heal thy ſoul. Do what depends on thee, as prudence requires; and leave to God the deciſion of when and how to relieve thee. Raiſe thine eyes, conſider who it is that preſerves the heavenly hoſt, who has ſaid to the ſea, 'thou ſhalt go no further,' is it not thy helper, thy counſellor, and thine everlaſting father?

There exiſts no diſtreſs, be it ſickneſs, be it loſs of fortune, or of thoſe dear to us; be it injury to our reputation ſo precious to us, which is not ſoftened by the idea of a divine Providence. We enjoy tranquillity in ſituations wherein the atheiſt becomes deſperate. By the help of religion we frequently rejoice in the midſt of adverſity, and we glory in what we endure; we thank God for it, when we bear it patiently as coming from him. Our depreſſion becomes intrepidity, a filial fear of God delivers our heart from the ſervile fear of man, and a renunciation of the moſt pleaſing gratifications of ſenſe takes the place of ſenſuality, in acquieſcence with the wiſe views of Providence. Whoever perceives God in all the events of his life, penetrates alſo into the life to come; and he makes up to himſelf, for the want of preſent enjoyments, by the an-

ticipation of thoſe he hopes for beyond the grave. The longeſt ſufferings terminate at death; and who can more effectually triumph over the fear of death than he who ſees in God the ſource of life? We are but duſt, animated by the Almighty. He from whom I received life will preſerve it to me; I am nothing, he is every thing. Whether he recalls my life ſooner or later, why ſhould I be alarmed; he calls me by the path of the grave to immortality. Then ſhall I behold clearly the admirable harmony of all his decrees, which in this world I can only perceive in a confuſed manner. Arm thyſelf with piety, and truſt in God as to the duration of thy life. Enjoy the advantages he beſtows, thank him for the afflictions he ſends thee, and remain firm and unſhaken.

I am perhaps expoſed to diſtreſſes which I have brought on myſelf. The neceſſity of enduring them is a ſevere duty. Yes, but doſt not thou repent of thy faults and errors? As to their conſequences, however grievous they may be, if God does not ſee fit to exempt thee from them, they are ſtill to thee by his intervention, means of felicity. Look on theſe conſequences in this point of view, which ſhews thee, that they may be changed into good by the wiſe direction of God; and reflect alſo, that without exerciſing juſtice he would not be God. Entering into his views thou wilt regain tranquillity,

thou wilt become thereby more wiſe, more humble, and more circumſpect.

It is eaſy to diſcover by what means we may acquire this reſignation, this confidence in God. It is by the frequent and attentive conſideration of his infinite perfections that we produce and maintain in ourſelves theſe diſpoſitions. However imperfectly we can diſcover his eſſence, we perceive however in his works, and in our conſcience, proofs of his power, his wiſdom, his goodneſs, and his holineſs. Our underſtanding draws lights from this attention to the attributes of God, and our hearts receive powerful conſolations. It would be folly to endeavour to diſcover all the extent and mutual correſpondence of his ways, every particular deſign in what he reſolves and executes; but it is wiſdom, and a ſource of true peace of mind, to conclude from the contemplation of his perfections, that he can will and perform nothing, but what is beſt for his creatures; and to rely humbly on him concerning our deſtiny, with as much zeal to acquit ourſelves of our duty, as of reverence and ſubmiſſion to his decrees. Our confidence in him is the more indiſpenſable, from our not being able to foreſee the chain of events in their totallity. Conſequently it is our duty, and ought to be our principal endeavour, to awaken and ſtrengthen in ourſelves this confidence, by attending to the clear indications of Providence, ſo viſible in

the particular events of human life. Whoever reflects on them ſeriouſly, will find in all the circumſtances of his life, whether happy or afflicting, the viſible operations of Providence; and will frequently have to acknowledge, that they have diſplayed views of wiſdom and goodneſs, even in apparent evil, and the all powerful direction of God in the various proſperities of a happy deſtiny. What do unexpected events, unexpected deliverances announce to us, unleſs it be that a wiſe Providence directs all things? Let us ſuppoſe the moſt obſcure life, the moſt abject condition; is there one of theſe that has not ſome impenetrable, ſecret, and wonderful tendency, which may be diſcovered by attentive inveſtigation, and become a ſource of inſtruction and of confidence in God? The great revolutions of ſtates and nations, teach us that an inviſible power preſides over their deſtiny, and regulates it with equal wiſdom and goodneſs. This is alſo learnt by him who reflects attentively, even from the moſt trifling events of every man's life. How important does a little circumſtance become in the courſe of a few years, (which at the time of its happening ſeemed perfectly indifferent) from the concurrence of events wholly out of our power, which our ſagacity could not foreſee, and which all our efforts could not promote? Why then do we not acknowledge

the interpoſition of God, and derive from this conſideration freſh courage? When a friend gives us a faithful account of the occurrences of his life, the ſame ſalutary views of Providence in regard to him, muſt ſtrike us, and fill our hearts with truſt and conſolation. If we poſſeſſed true and circumſtantial details of the lives of many perſons in the higheſt and loweſt condition; in which their characters and every trifling event relating to them were faithfully delineated, we ſhould with admiration behold in them, the power of God alone operating, whilſt man performed nothing on his part; or directing him ſecretly, whilſt in his own idea he did every thing himſelf; and making him happy at the very moment in which his enemies wiſhed and projected his deſtruction.

Learning thus to diſcover and to reſpect the ways of Providence, in adverſe and in favourable circumſtances, which every day of our own lives may lead us to obſerve, we ſhall at all times ſufficiently keep alive our confidence in God. The more cauſe we have to be convinced, with regard to our own lot, of our inſufficiency and inability to direct it, the more humble we ſhould be. Not only our humility, but alſo our reſignation to the decrees of the Almighty, and our unbounded acquieſcence in them, ſhould be ſtrengthened by theſe re-

flections on the divine wiſdom and goodneſs. The faithful diſcharge of all our duties, muſt be inſeparable from theſe conſiderations, ſince we ſhall always find the deſigns of God in favour of mankind much more to their advantage, than what they can deſire for themſelves.

We do not find that this virtue, any more than humility and univerſal benevolence, makes any part of the morality of the ancient philoſophers; what they have ſubſtituted in its place, was rather a pride of heart, and a philoſophical bravado, than a wiſe and well-founded confidence. It is no where to be found, ſuch as it is ſhewn to us by revealed religion in all its immoveable firmneſs. Yes, in the midſt of the greateſt ſufferings and afflictions of life, to be able to ſay with a lively and ſolid ſatisfaction, "whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee. My fleſh and my heart faileth; but God is the ſtrength of my heart and my portion for ever."* In the midſt of all the dangers of life, to be able to think and to ſay with a firm and lively confidence; "a thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee, becauſe thou haſt made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the moſt high, thy habitation."† Surroun-

* Pſalm, lxxiii. v. 25. 26. † Pſalm, xci. v. 7 and 9.

ded by every thing terrifying, to be able to think, "though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea."* "Though he ſlay me yet will I truſt in him."† Can there be a greater elevation of mind! And did any one who is wiſe only by the help of reaſon, ever teach ſuch confidence in God, or ſhew the reality of it by example? When, on loſing the whole of their fortune, has ſuch a one been heard to ſay with this magnanimous reſolution; "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord?"‡ When is it that, notwithſtanding all the obſtacles that can be encountered by virtue, notwithſtanding all the power which proſperity and adverſity, elevation, and ſubjection, have over our hearts to ſhake them in the practice of duty; when is it that the philoſopher has thought or ſaid, with truly divine heroiſm; "For I am perſuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord,"§ and, conſequently, to make me loſe my truſt in his aſſiſtance? No, philoſophy never riſes to this ſublimity of ſoul:

* Pſalm xlvi. v. 2. † Job xiii. v. 15.

‡ Job i. v. 22. § Rom. chap. viii. v. 38. 39.

of this religion alone, is capable. Shall we not be attached to it? Shall we not make it ſerve every day to animate our confidence in God; that confidence which can alone compoſe and fill our hearts with real conſolation in the dark hour of adverſity, or in the chearfulneſs of a proſperous ſtate?

TWENTY-SECOND LESSON.

ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN. FIRST, ON THAT TO BE GIVEN THEM IN THEIR EARLIEST YEARS.

I now proceed to mention ſome duties of domeſtic and ſocial life, ſuch as thoſe of education, of conjugal love, and the connections of blood and friendſhip. After having explained theſe, I ſhall terminate my moral leſſons with a ſketch of natural religion.

When we conſider the duties of education in their fulleſt extent, and the labours and cares they require from fathers and mothers, relatively to all the obſtacles and all the difficulties belonging to it; whether we reflect on the prudence and information neceſſary to encounter them, on the length of time during which they are to be continued, and on the expences they occaſion, it ſeems that man has

not a more difficult duty to perform. The love, however, which unites the father and mother, ſweetens theſe duties, by their dividing them; they are led to perform them by the tendereſt ſolicitude, and by the helpleſs ſtate of their infants, which are ſo dear a part of themſelves, and which they cannot leave without aſſiſtance. Frequently the gratitude of children, the joy of ſeeing them draw near, by little and little, to the end to which it is propoſed to conduct them, is a precious reward to the parents. So many are the ſad conſequences ſeen to ariſe from the negligence of fathers and mothers, in their endeavours for the good of their children, and ſuch great advantages to the ſtate and to ſociety in general, from the performance of their duty in regard to education, that theſe duties may be looked on as the moſt natural and moſt ſacred, the moſt arduous and the moſt delightful. The moſt painful conſideration attending this duty, is that it is often performed without ſucceſs, and that parents have ſometimes the grief of finding it impoſſible to prevent the vices and misfortunes of their children. However the idea of this melancholy want of ſucceſs may alarm, it is nevertheleſs a great conſolation to have diſcharged the duty faithfully; and it is on the other hand, an aggravation of diſtreſs and affliction, to have to reproach ourſelves with not having uſed all poſſible

means of preventing this misfortune, or of having employed them careleſsly.

At your age, gentlemen, you ſeem to be for many years diſpenſed from the duty of labouring in the buſineſs of educating children; conſidering, however, its high importance, it is fit to make early preparation for its proper performance. The ſpace between youth and maturity is very ſhort, and woe to him who defers till he becomes a father, all application to the ſcience of education. I know ſeveral young people, who uſed to attend my lectures, leſs than ten years ago, who are already fathers of families. Will not this reſpectable title, and the duties it impoſes, concern moſt of you? From whom is more capacity in the education of others to be expected, than from thoſe who have devoted themſelves to the ſtudy of the ſciences, and to that of morality, which ought to be its primary object? A man of letters, who writes worſe than a man without learning, a learned father of a family, who does not educate his children ſo well as a ſimple artiſan, how much do they diſhonour the doctrine which is taught in colleges and academies! Thoſe who are not called on to act in the quality of fathers, may they not be employed and deſtined to direct and ſuperintend the education of other peoples children? Yes, young men, who devote yourſelves to ſtudy, the ſtate requires from you that you ſhould contribute

your ſhare towards forming the riſing generation to wiſdom and virtue, by public or private inſtruction, in families or in auditories, in your cloſet, or in the palaces of princes and great men. The parents and friends of thoſe young people, in whoſe education you may be called upon to aſſiſt, expect from you lights and directions; and he from whom you derive your mental talents, God, who ſupplies you with the occaſions of cultivating them, has not confided them to you for a leſs purpoſe than to contribute to the eſſential happineſs of thoſe you may be called on to train to wiſdom. You may have to fulfill all the duties of education towards thoſe who may owe to you their exiſtence; or you may be required by ſome dying father, to ſupply his place to his children, in the quality of preceptor.

To educate children, is to cultivate their underſtandings, their hearts, their natural diſpoſitions, both of body and mind, ſo as to make them happy, by endeavouring to promote the happineſs of others, and to put them in a capacity of fulfilling the high views of their deſtination. It is to inſtruct them early in the knowledge of God, and of themſelves, of the world, of men, and of religion, ſo that they may regulate their conduct in conſequence of this knowledge; It is to form them to the knowledge, the love, and to the practice of virtue, from their earlieſt years. By the means of education, we in-

fuſe into the minds of youth, the light of our underſtandings, that of religion, the leſſons of our experience, and the good diſpoſitions of our hearts. The manner in which we perform this, has certainly great influence, but the individual character of each child, muſt determine in every particular caſe, in what manner it is beſt for us to proceed.

Our children are a part of ourſelves; as we give them life, ſo we alſo communicate to them a weak or vigorous conſtitution; and frequently thoſe inclinations which ariſe from natural diſpoſition. Who that reflects on this can doubt, but that from theſe conſiderations reſults a duty, towards thoſe who may one day derive their exiſtence from us, even before they are born. Vicious fathers and mothers, unhealthy, wicked, or fooliſh parents, have little reaſon to hope for a poſterity healthy in body and mind, and bleſſed with good diſpoſitions. How eſſential, therefore, whether unmarried or married, is the duty of preſerving ourſelves from all the evils which may deſcend to our children, and affect their minds or their bodies? A youth paſſed in innocence, health prudently attended to, a chaſte union between perſons attached to each other, a cultivated mind furniſhed with good principles, a heart free from violent paſſions, are qualities due in a father and a mother to their yet unborn children, and the care of acquiring theſe qualities is a duty incumbent on pa-

rents. Their duties, in a word, pre-ſuppoſe thoſe of man, of a reaſonable and virtuous huſband, and they are more particularly determined in their application by the birth of children. A virtuous father may not, I allow, from want of information, be able to give his children the moſt advantageous education; but the beſt informed father who is deficient in virtue, will educate them ſtill worſe, and all his endeavours will but make automatons of them, artfully ſet in motion by the ſprings of vain glory and intereſt. It is certainly poſſible that fathers and mothers endued with ſenſe and piety, may allow themſelves unwittingly to be drawn aſide by an exceſs of affection, to ſpoil their children; but happily they are not always the only perſons employed in their education. Friends, relations, maſters, frequently ſhare with them in this employment, or take their places at an early period; and it is not uncommon to ſee the ſon of a vicious father, and the daughter of a woman entirely given up to the world, under the care of wiſe and virtuous inſtructors. The father and mother are ſeldom both people of bad characters. One may poſſeſs the talents of the underſtanding, the other a ſuperior ſhare of virtue and religion; the exceſs of tenderneſs in the mother, will often be counterbalanced by the ſeverity of the father. If many parents with good intentions want capacity, or by their ſituations and neceſſary occupa-

tions are prevented from devoting themſelves to the education of their children, they may in part reſign the employment into other hands. Whoever is truly attached to his family will ſpare neither care, expence, nor attention to find out, and procure perſons in whom they may confide for the good ſucceſs of their vigilance and inſtructions. It is a folly for parents to expect their children to be well educated, when they content themſelves with putting them into the hands of a preceptor, whom they conſider merely as an upper ſervant; and whoſe care and patience they think amply rewarded by a trifling ſalary, without paying him ſufficient attention to make him reſpectable in the eyes of his pupils. Fathers and mothers who enquire only into the abilities of the perſon to whom they entruſt their children, without troubling themſelves about his moral conduct and the good qualities of his heart, are ignorant of what conſtitutes education, and of the nature of man. As to thoſe who recommend perſons lightly to the employment of preceptors, they incur guilt, not only towards private families, but even towards the public. Let us ſuppoſe, as previouſly neceſſary to a good education, certain favourable domeſtic circumſtances, and proper abilities in thoſe engaged in it, ſince every direction on this ſubject, is but forming an uſeleſs plan, when parents and maſters do not poſſeſs qualifications ne-

ceſſary towards its execution. Of what uſe, in fact, is the beſt plan of architecture, if an able artiſt cannot be found to execute it? Suppoſing, therefore, in parents and preceptors the requiſite qualities, it is not difficult to determine what are the means and neceſſary methods to be uſed in education. We will now point out what is eſſential, in regard to the firſt inſtructions to be given to children in their earlieſt years, and to the care to be taken to form their characters. Whoever reflects on the end of education, on the nature of children, and who conſults the experience acquired on this ſubject by intelligent people, can hardly be in ſuſpence as to the choice of the beſt rules to follow. The particular application of theſe rules, can only be learnt by the knowledge of the child's character, and the circumſtances of the family.

The firſt duty impoſed by the birth of a child, on thoſe from whom he derives his exiſtence, is the care to be taken of his food and his health. This is what appears to excite the greateſt attention, and yet is frequently ill performed in various ways.

Parents ought to watch continually over whatever may in infancy lay the foundation of a ſound and vigorous conſtitution in their children. Our character depends much on our conſtitution, and grows with it from our childhood. An impure blood, a difficult or irregular circulation of the fluids

and the vital ſpirits, too great a ſenſibility or irritability in the organs of ſenſe, muſt have an actual and future influence on our minds, and determine our mode of thinking and feeling. What benumbs our bodies, or makes them too ſuceptible, is an obſtacle to the empire of the mind and the ſubjection of our deſires. The ſoul performs its operations with much more difficulty in a feeble body, and an infirm body continually obſtructs the ſoul in the execution of its intentions. A conſtitution too much weakened by over delicacy, and which from being conſtantly habituated to agreeable ſenſations, is unable to ſupport the moſt trifling inconveniencies, imperceptibly influences the ſoul as to the falſe opinions it will form of the greater or leſſer value of things, and the worth of its deſires or averſions.

It is inconteſtable that in every caſe, wherein illneſs or particular circumſtances do not invincibly oppoſe it, the moſt ſacred duty of a mother is to nurſe and ſuckle her own child. One proof of this being an eſſential obligation, ariſes from the pleaſure nature has reſerved to the mothers who acquit themſelves of this duty; and when we conſider how many pains and diſeaſes frequently reſult from the neglect of it, can we doubt of the reality of the obligation to perform it? In ſo doing, the mother ſeems not only to gain the love of her child, but ſtrength-

ens her own tenderneſs towards it. Her attention to its health will be greater, and by having it more frequently under her own eye, ſhe will be better able to guard againſt the faults into which nurſes are apt to fall, who too often weaken the children committed to their care, by bringing them up too delicately. She will in ſome ſort tranſmit to the child ſhe ſuckles, together with the beſt milk, the virtuous diſpoſitions of her heart. Alas! does not experience often ſhew us, that nurſes communicate to the children they ſuckle mental as well as bodily diſorders? That ſometimes they feel no affection for them, and at others are fooliſhly and blindly fond of them; that they ſeek to appeaſe and attach them in a thouſand ways, which lay the foundation of the child's future bad character; who will thereby contract diſpoſitions to obſtinacy, to ſenſuality, to greedineſs, to violence, and perhaps even to lewdneſs.

It is admirable to obſerve, how robuſt and healthy children become under the care of a ſimple peaſant. What can be the reaſon of this? Certainly; firſt, the good conſtitution of the father and mother, and next their ſimple food, milk, which is ſo wholeſome for children who are accuſtomed to it, the freſh water they drink, the pure air to which they are early expoſed, the ſun under whoſe benign influence they acquire vigour; whilſt the children confined to great towns are ſtifled with heat, in rooms

from which the air is too much excluded. Look at that little peaſant juſt eſcaped from his mother's arms, how ſoon he walks with a firm and ſteady ſtep, eating a ſlice of coarſe brown bread, which he will eaſily digeſt without aſſiſtance from the faculty. Good beer, or pure water, will ſupply to him the place of the beſt wine, or whey that of any other refreſhing liquor. His tender limbs and the circulation of his blood, have never been impeded by painful and unwholeſome ligatures, yet he is not leſs well made and robuſt. Sometimes on the ſoft graſs, ſometimes on the hard floor, he has been allowed to ſport at his eaſe, and though thinly, or badly clothed, ſo far from being lamed, he is ſtrengthened. A careful mother of a certain rank, ought to adopt in regard to the early education of her children, as far as the delicacy of conſtitution with which they are born will permit, the praiſe-worthy practices of the country people. The father on his ſide, ſhould conſider it his duty to encourage his wife in the performance of theſe attentions, to ſweeten them to her by teſtimonies of tender affection, and to facilitate them by a rational concurrence in them. Plutarch relates of Cato the cenſor, that when he had a ſon, he thought nothing of ſo much conſequence, after the affairs of the republic, as to go to his wife when ſhe waſhed the child. How

many fathers in our days would be aſhamed to follow his example!

The ſecond, and no leſs important duty, in the education of children, is to form their reaſon, even from their moſt tender years. The child ſoon awakens from the benumbed ſtate in which it exiſts during the firſt days after its birth. It begins to live by its feelings ſooner than by its underſtanding; it has feelings before it has thoughts. Its deſires are expreſſed by tones and geſtures ſooner than by words. The impreſſion made on it by objects of ſenſe ſupplies, during its firſt years, the place of reaſon. If then we wiſh to direct this faculty of feeling and the deſires natural to children, till reaſon, properly ſo called, developes itſelf, we ought to remove from them very attentively, as much as is poſſible, and whenever over care on this point may not be attended with dangerous conſequences, all the objects which may make a painful or violent impreſſion on their feelings; and on the other hand, place before them whatever may awaken in them agreeable and innocent ſenſations. As, however, all the depraved inclinations of children do not ariſe from the organs of ſenſe, but that a well verified experience proves to us that the ſeeds of them are in the heart of the child at its birth, we ought carefully to repreſs thoſe inclinations from the earlieſt period, by a wiſe reſiſtance, by a painful feeling, pru-

dently excited in its body, and afterwards in its mind, when that is capable of being affected. Theſe kind of irregular inclinations which appear in children even from their earlieſt years, and which ſtrive for maſtery, are, in particular, obſtinacy, paſſion, greedineſs, and a ſpirit of revenge.

We create too ſoon for children a world of their own, a world of trifles and play-things. There is poſſibly no great harm in this; but perhaps alſo we uſe too little circumſpection; and by the means we employ to amuſe and appeaſe the child, and to divert ourſelves with hearing it expreſs its puerile affections by ſenſible objects, we often excite in its heart irregular emotions. A play-thing is given, which we afterwards attempt to take away, by which the child is taught to reſiſt our taking it, to hide it, and pretend it has not got it. It is taught to extort from us what gives it pleaſure. But is not this nouriſhing its whims and its greedineſs? As you would refuſe to put into its hands an open knife, however loudly it may cry out for it; ſo you ought reſolutely to refuſe it a play-thing, which it pretends to obtain by its cries. You endeavour to appeaſe it after a fall, or when ſomething has been taken from it, by threatening the perſon who has taken it, or the play-thing, the table, the floor, or the earth againſt which the child ſtruck itſelf. Do you not thus excite it to become revengeful,

and to punish whatever seems to offend? You dress, you adorn the child; and with tones of admiration place it before a looking glass, appearing pleased when it admires itself, and that it shews delight by its looks and gestures. This joy, innocent as you conceive it in regard to the child, what is it, in fact, but an encouragement to vanity and self love? We ought also to attend to what is seldom thought of, yet ought not to be neglected in a good education, not to spoil the natural taste of children, by giving them ill formed play-things, clothes made of materials overcharged with pattern or variety of colours, or to din in its ears by discordant songs wretchedly sung.

Amongst the most common faults in ordinary education, and against which attentive parents should particularly guard, I chiefly reckon the following: Children are left too long under the care of nurses, or governesses, who have neither morals nor abilities. The two or three first years are thought to be of no importance, and it is not thought necessary during that period to regulate their inclinations, as they cannot comprehend any lesson or exhortation, which might be addressed to them on the subject. But they understand the tone of the voice, the air of the countenance, the threats or punishment inflicted on them, and all these are so many means fitted to bend them to what we require of them. A

mother, a female relation, a rational governeſs, who takes on herſelf this early part of education, has often a rational talent, a particular capacity which makes them ingenious in finding out what modes are beſt ſuited to the child. Their attachment to it and an idea of duty, makes them apply with vigilance, affability, good humour, and patience to its education. It ought, therefore, to be under their direction during the firſt years of its life. It is not eaſy to conceive with how much penetration children remark, however young they may be, the faults of grown people; how deep the impreſſion theſe make on them; and how much it inclines them to copy ſuch faults. It is too common to follow the plan of education, according to which we have ourſelves been educated; we loſe ſight of the particular character of the child and the ſituation of its family; we depend too much on our judgment; we conſult experienced people too little; as if it were a diſgrace to parents or governors, to take advice on a matter of the higheſt importance. We make too little diſtinction between faults which are of no conſequence, and thoſe, which if not properly corrected, may become prevailing habits. Sometimes we are violently bent on extirpating every fault from the mind at the ſame time; ſometimes we defer oppoſing vice till it becomes deeply rooted in the ſoul. Inſtead of ſeeking by innocent means to conciliate the affection

of children, and to increaſe it, we propoſe to bring them under ſubjection by fear and puniſhments, and thereby inſpire them merely with diſlike to thoſe who treat them thus, and to the orders preſcribed by them. We reprove, we threaten, we chaſtiſe haſtily, and in the firſt emotion of anger. We are not ſufficiently attentive to diſcover the capacities and inclinations of children, neither do we enough accuſtom them to reflect on their little employments, as if we thought them utterly incapable of reflection. In ſhort, we conduct ourſelves towards them ſo as to give an idea that we conſider the ſtudy of the ſciences, the gracefulneſs of the body, and the manners, as what is moſt eſſential in education.

The beſt rule we can purſue in our earlieſt inſtruction of children, is moſt aſſuredly to make it rather a pleaſure than a taſk; a play rather than a dry leſſon; a converſation ariſing from the occaſion rather than a long harangue in form. It muſt, in a word, be ſomething appropriated to their comprehenſion, and which may continually ſerve to feed their curioſity. Name frequently and diſtinctly, the ſenſible objects which ſtrike the ſight or hearing of children; ſpeak of them to children and give a ſhort deſcription of them, in ſuch terms as they are already acquainted with; they will ſoon in ſome degree comprehend language, and from their natural propenſity to imitation, will ſoon be able to ſpeak it.

We may begin very early to inſtruct them by ſuch diſcourſe as circumſtances give occaſion to. But as to formal leſſons, during which the child muſt be confined to a ſeat, its eyes fixed to a book and obliged to employ itſelf on the ſame ſubject, not for ſome minutes, but for whole hours; theſe are repugnant to the capacity and natural vivacity of children, and can only fill them with diſguſt to inſtruction. They ſhould be taught to know their letters without the aſſiſtance of the alphabet, by ſhewing them traced on play-things, cards, figures on the wall, or on a tree. When they once know their letters, we may then endeavour to make the children name them from a book, not confining them to this employment more than a few minutes at a time. The book for their uſe ſhould, at firſt, preſent them with the names of things agreeable to them, conſiſting of one, two, or three ſyllables; after this we may give them ſhort amuſing ſentences in queſtion and anſwer, in which each ſyllable ſhould be ſeparate and diſtinct; after theſe ſentences we may introduce little hiſtories, fables, letters, moral precepts, and at length, ſuch of the fundamental truths of religion as are not above the capacity of children. That this inſtruction may be amuſing to them, we muſt, during the firſt five or ſix years, confine it to a few minutes, in the courſe of two or three hours, and

ſtill farther render it eaſy to them by ſome entertaining invention.

The great book of nature, which ſets before us all beings contained in it, whether animate or inanimate, is that which is moſt fit to be preſented to the curioſity of children; in order to familiarize them with a world in which every object is new to them, and to enrich their minds with juſt and clear ideas. How rich is nature in ſubjects which afford an agreeable exhibition to children, which they may with pleaſure learn to call by their names, and to impreſs on their minds! Why do we ſo ſeldom follow this path with our children, which they themſelves ſeem to point out to us by their curioſity? Heaven, earth, our gardens, the ſurrounding country, do they not offer to our view the original of all our knowledge, throughout inſtructive, and continually amuſing? The young pupil, chearfully conducted by an intelligent guide, as it were by the hand, from one object to another, can take in a great number, and uſe them to his advantage. He pleaſes his ſight, enriches his memory, and exerciſes his imagination. Curious to know every thing which ſurrounds him, all that he is ſo deſirous of being inſtructed in may, by the aſſiſtance of queſtions properly introduced, be employed to form his underſtanding.

Works of art may ſupply what cannot always come under the child's obſervation in the works of

nature, and are the ſecond objects to be applied to education. How much a child is pleaſed with pictures, prints, and medals. He is delighted to ſee in them, animals, birds, fiſhes, flowers, houſes, men, which he has already obſerved in nature, or of which he has already ſeen ſomething of the ſame kind. The child ſhould be accuſtomed, from time to time, to give an account of what it has ſeen and comprehended, and taught to expreſs itſelf intelligibly. From its fifth or ſixth year, its attention and reflection ſhould be exerciſed to bring it to a habit of forming juſt ideas, and a ſound judgment of things, whether by the utenſils uſed in a houſe, or by ſimple geometrical figures; and we ſhould endeavour, by queſtions ſuited to its capacity, and by comparing one thing with another, to make it perceive the difference between them, and to expreſs it in words. The child ſhould be taught to trace, however coarſely, theſe geometrical figures, that it may know them perfectly; they may be cut out in a card, or made by ſome mechanic. Little pieces of wood ſo formed as to compoſe a regular building, which the child may put up or take to pieces at its pleaſure, will give it an idea of the different parts of architecture, and the names belonging to them. In the ſame manner, geographical charts cut out and ſtuck on paſteboard, will afford the child another amuſing and inſtructive occupation in ranging, after they are indiſ-

criminately mixed, the different counties and provinces of various countries in their proper order, or placing the ſeveral diviſions and countries in the world properly, as to their relative ſituations one to another. This muſt be done after the child has been taught their poſitions on the map; and at firſt, it will require our aſſiſtance. With the help of an inſtructor, this occupation may teach the child a habit of attention and reflection without fatiguing it. A caſe of printed letters, from which the child may be employed to take out the proper ones for forming ſyllables, words, and ſhort ſentences, is alſo a good exerciſe for the attention and memory. As ſoon as the child is able to write, it ſhould be required, day after day, and week after week, to make a journal in which it ſhould inſert all its little ſtock of knowledge. If the point in queſtion is to inſtruct the child in an ancient language, there is no better mode of doing this, than by the aſſiſtance of a good maſter to teach it to the child in the ſame manner as it learnt its mother's tongue; without any grammatical rules at firſt, except declenſions and conjugations. The child's memory being once furniſhed with words, phraſes, and ſelect ſentences, it muſt frequently be made to read and to tranſlate; and after ſome years thus employed, recourſe may be had to an abridged grammar, the rules of which may be applied to what the child reads or compoſes.

Every inſtruction reduced into action, and ſet forth by example, is ingenious, and, conſequently, uſeful to children. By ſuch means they may be inſtructed in the principles of morality, moral maxims may be preſented to them, ſometimes through the medium of ingenious imaginary adventures, as is done by Madame le Prince de Becamont, ſometimes by fables and little tales. A child reads theſe kind of books with pleaſure, and it is neceſſary the perſon with whom it reads, ſhould lead it imperceptibly to expreſs the ſentiments and ideas excited in its own mind, that they may be rectified if neceſſary. In order to form the heart of the child, from its earlieſt years, to the virtuous ſentiments of humanity, compaſſion, benevolence, gratitude, friendſhip, humility, and truſt in Providence, its inſtructors ſhould be attentive to collect from hiſtory, particularly from that of the bible, examples of theſe virtues and their oppoſite vices. Taking care in reciting, to expreſs them clearly, and in a manner pleaſant to the child. They ſhould alſo make the child read them, give its opinion concerning them, and try to make applications from them, by which it may be brought to admire what is excellent in theſe virtues, and to contract horror for the hideouſneſs of vice. If it is wiſhed, for example, to ſet before the child the humility of St Paul; begin with turning its attention to the diſtinguiſhed ſuperiority of this apoſtle, to his

great knowledge of God, to the ſupernatural power with which he commanded nature, cured the ſick by a ſingle word, reſtored ſight to the blind, and even raiſed the dead. Speak to the child of his zeal for the glory of God, of his charity to all men; which manifeſted itſelf in his conduct, in his labours, in his greatneſs of mind, in his patience, in dangers, perſecutions, inſults, and ſufferings. Shew it how diſintereſted and magnanimous this great apoſtle was, in labouring with his own hands, to procure his ſubſiſtence and that of his colleagues, rather than be burthenſome to the churches he had founded; and which by his inſtructions, became more and more firmly eſtabliſhed in the faith. With how much greatneſs of mind does St Paul endure all inconveniences and perſecutions, with the view of performing the will of God! He riſes ſuperior to famine and affluence, to ſhame and glory, to priſons and to bonds, to life and to death, and to all the great ones of the earth become his enemies, from the little value this Chriſtian hero ſets on earthly greatneſs. This extraordinary man, this meſſenger of God, endued with the power of working miracles, this zealous and eloquent teacher, this founder of ſo many churches, this benefactor of whole nations, has a truly modeſt opinion of himſelf, humbles himſelf below others, and conſiders all men as his brethren! We ſee in all his enterpriſes, in which he diſ-

plays the moſt ardent zeal, much prudence and unceaſing application; we ſee him give the glory wholly to God, as to the author of all good, from whom he derives the will and power to exert theſe virtues. What a powerful impreſſion muſt ſo great an example of humility make on the heart of young people, when ſet before them in all its extent and full force, in ſuch a manner as they can comprehend! Will not the child's heart be ſenſible to that, which the character of a man ſo modeſt and ſo humble has of reſpectable in itſelf, fitted to captivate the affection of others, and ſecure to himſelf univerſal eſteem and confidence? Will it not ſee a clear proof of this truth, in a circumſtance of the apoſtle's life, which is impoſſible to read unmoved; "they conducted Paul, altogether, with their wifes and children, to the ſhip, and all in tears fell on his neck and kiſſed him."

All the other ſaints propoſed to us as examples in the ſcriptures, are diſtinguiſhed by their humility; they have alſo ſhewn a love for God, a charity towards men, very worthy of our imitation. This ſhould be placed before the young pupil, whom we deſire to direct in the paths of virtue, and in whoſe heart we wiſh to fix its principles.

We muſt endeavour to inſpire it with a wiſh to be itſelf charitable, benevolent, faithful, true, and af-

fectionate to all men; from the examples of theſe virtues it ſhould learn to diſtinguiſh their principal features. The heart of the child ſhould be made to feel that Job, in aſſiſting the diſtreſſed, in being eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and a father to the indigent, recommended himſelf more to God than by the multitude of his flocks, his ſervants and all the affluence of wealth; that in the midſt of the moſt painful ſufferings, inſulted by his friends and lying in the duſt, he was happier by his piety and ſubmiſſion to the will of God, than he could have been on a throne, ſurrounded by flatterers and all the glory of the age in which he lived, had he been a prey to the remorſe of an evil conſcience, and to a ſervile dread, which would have allowed him to ſee nothing in the conduct of God towards him, but the puniſhment of his crimes. Even a child may be made ſenſible of theſe conſiderations, and by this early feeling of what is right, like the young eagle who is induced to approach the ſun by its heat and ſplendour, it may be excited to endeavour after the attainment of the higheſt pitch of virtue. To promote this purpoſe let us aſſiduouſly preſent to the mind of the young pupil, in ſuch a manner as to make a lively impreſſion, thoſe examples of humanity towards men, and of reſpect and ſubmiſſion towards God, which the ſcriptures ſo frequently afford us; and whilſt we imperceptibly aſſiſt his re-

flections, let him enjoy the pleaſure of thinking, of diſcovering theſe examples, and forming an opinion of them from himſelf; and by ſuch means let us lead him to perceive the ſenſe of the moſt beautiful and affecting paſſages of ſcripture; from hence he will conceive more juſt ideas of virtue, and become more attached to it than by a dry and difficult catechiſm. The example of Abraham ready to ſacrifice his ſon in obedience to God, will make him underſtand more eaſily the characters of faith and divine love, ſufficiently powerful to triumph over the tendereſt ſentiments of our nature towards an only ſon, than it would be poſſible for a dry diſſertation to make him comprehend. Can there be a more ſtriking picture of humility and gratitude than the following confeſſion, made to God by one of the patriarchs; "I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou haſt ſhewn unto thy ſervant."*

All the miracles performed in favour of religion, are ſo many ſketches of the divine perfection, and as well as the works of nature bear the impreſſion of divinity. In them, the young citizen of the world ſhould learn to know his creator, his providence, and at the ſame time, to expreſs his heart with the ſenſe of his maker's goodneſs and holineſs. What is the whole life of our divine ſaviour, his ſuffer-

* Geneſis, chap. xxxii. v. 11.

ings, his death, his reſurrection, his aſcenſion, what is it but the hiſtory of heaven and earth, of the divine and human natures placed within our view? What does this teach us when clearly ſet before us? Much ſuperior to philoſophy and all the depth of reaſoning, it inſtructs us in the perfections of the Supreme Being, of his holineſs, of his tender compaſſion; and in the perſon of our Saviour, it ſhews us the moſt perfect the moſt admirable model of obedience towards God, of charity towards a guilty world, of humility, of ſelf renunciation, of greatneſs of mind in all ſufferings and perſecutions, endured by the moſt perfect innocence, and ſupported even to the extent of a moſt cruel death. This hiſtory, ſet before our young pupil in the intereſting manner it ought to be, ſo as to awaken attention and feeling, cannot fail to make the deepeſt impreſſion on his heart and underſtanding. You will ſee him affected even to tears, give himſelf up to the feelings of reſpect, of love, and of obedience, which he will acknowledge to be due to his God and to his Saviour. But inſtead of following this method, how often are we, for our primary inſtruction in religion, forced to learn by heart articles of faith, of which we can form no idea, and to pronounce words which convey to us nothing but ſound; the meaning being to us totally obſcure? How frequently do we, from dry and tedious explanations of ſome points of doc-

trine, from our being obliged to load our memories with a catechiſm not adapted to our capacities, imbibe an averſion to religion even in childhood; though of all things it is moſt calculated to touch our hearts, and to impreſs them with the love of God? How many prayers are we taught to recite, which can only ſuit a more advanced period in life, and which accuſtom us to an irrational and purely mechanical devotion? I fear that with many, the unpleaſant mode employed to inſtruct them in regard to religion during childhood, occaſions a diſguſt to its truths and its duties thoughout the remainder of their lives. To make the mode of inſtruction by examples taken from the bible more impreſſive, I would recommend the uſe of prints, delineating clearly the moſt remarkable facts contained in the ſcriptures.* Let the preceptor add to theſe examples taken from holy writ, thoſe furniſhed by profane hiſtory; but let this be done with great caution, that the pupil may not confound the virtue which is only the effect of reaſon, that reaſon which is ſometimes ſo fanciful and ſometimes ſo ſuperſtitious, with that virtue which is derived from religious principle; let him not confound the practice of virtues which are conſtitutional, or originate in

* Mrs Trimmer's abridged bible and new teſtament for children, with prints adapted, and ſold ſeparately, will anſwer this purpoſe.

vanity, with that which ſprings from a mind enlightened by ſupernatural inſtruction, and a heart devoted entirely to God; let him not put the wiſdom and probity of a Socrates, or an Ariſtides, in competition with the knowledge of a David, or a Saint Paul; neither let him imagine that ſome ſhining actions conſtitute the character of a virtuous man. Under theſe reſtrictions, examples taken from the celebrated characters of antiquity may very juſtly be made uſe of, to inſtruct the young pupil in ſocial virtues, and to excite in his heart a noble deſire of imitation. Unaſſiſted, however, by well judged reflections, the life of a virtuous heathen muſt ever preſent a very obſcure and imperfect picture of virtue.

The details of the private life of a wiſe and virtuous man, are undoubtedly more inſtructive to youth, than the pompous circumſtances contained in the lives of the great. We ſhould collect ſuch memoirs, therefore, as are compoſed with taſte and well written; deſcribing the life of perſons of either ſex, whatever rank they may hold in ſociety, which deſerves to be propoſed as an example. By purſuing them attentively with his pupil, the preceptor will ſupply him with materials for the cultivation of his taſte and feelings, and ſatisfy his inclination for reading. If there exiſt in the pupil's own

family, any good memoirs and illuſtrious examples amongſt his anceſtors; or that the preceptor can point out ſome ſuch, amongſt thoſe families with whom the pupil is acquainted, they will be more intereſting to him, in proportion as they will more nearly concern him. In general, the daily example of the parents, teachers, ſervants, and companions of the pupil ſhould be applied to the purpoſes of education, and made to illuſtrate rules of morality, which may deeply impreſs his young mind. We know that many of the virtues ſo much admired in the Chineſe at this day, originate in the education they give their children, and in the order which reigns in the interior of their houſes; but above all, from their young people being inſtructed leſs by rules and principles, than by the examples living or deceaſed, which are continually placed before them. Each father and mother of a family, or each eldeſt ſon, is obliged by the laws of the country, to furniſh by his conduct, examples of all the ſocial virtues, on pain of incurring the ſevereſt puniſhments. All children are bound to revere theſe examples, nearly as divine; and to teſtify an unbounded attachment, almoſt to exceſs, towards their parents and their relations. Their prime example of virtue is always their emperor, who paſſes for a ſon of heaven, and whoſe conduct, as long as it is conformable to the laws of the country, is a living commentary on vir-

tue and the commands of heaven. Whatever faults the Chineſe may commit in the application of theſe rules, we muſt ever allow that the rules and the advantages to be derived from them, prove the wiſdom of thoſe who are directed by them, and the power of examples in education.

TWENTY-THIRD LESSON.

ON THE EDUCATION TO BE GIVEN TO YOUNG PEOPLE, WHO ARE NO LONGER CHILDREN.

THE preceding leſſon had for its object the duty of cultivating the heart and underſtanding of children from their earlieſt years, by a good education. If we would not loſe all the fruit of theſe early cares, we muſt redouble our vigilance in the following years, in proportion as the faculties of children open with their ripening age.

In order to encreaſe the ſtock of information of the child who begins to reflect, it ſhould have its attention again brought back to the ſtudy of nature, and to the contemplation of its wonders moſt likely to be underſtood at ten or twelve years old. Let his preceptor bring him acquainted with our planetary ſyſtem, teach him the number, courſe and immenſe ſize of the celeſtial bodies, of the ſun and planets,

and their aſtoniſhing diſtance; let him give his pupil an idea of what concerns our globe and its relations reſpecting the ſun, of the benign influence of this luminary, of the properties of air and water, the periodical revolution of the ſeaſons and of days; and on every occaſion to call on him to admire the power, the wiſdom, and the goodneſs of the author of nature, in which ſhine forth ſo much beauty, ſo much order, ſo much magnificence and utility. The preceptor may find many excellent directions and aſſiſtances in a variety of books publiſhed on theſe ſubjects.* But if he even extend his inſtructions no further than to make his pupil obſerve the earth and its various productions, man and the admirable ſtructure of his body, he will open to him a ſource of inexhauſtible information, reflection, and of knowledge equally uſeful and agreeable. It would, however, be of ſmall importance to employ merely the pupils underſtanding and memory on theſe ſubjects; this would not procure him any moral improvement. The firſt impreſſions ariſing from obſerving the wonderful ſcenes of nature, ſhould be thoſe of pleaſure and of religion; I fear that the mode in which in-

* Les inſtructions d'un pere a ſes enfants ſur la nature et la religion, by Tremley, and Payley's Natural Theology may, I ſhould ſuppoſe, properly ſupply the place of ſome German authors here referred to by Gellert, but which I do not mention, as they cannot be of general uſe to Engliſh readers.

ſtructions on ſuch ſubjects are frequently conveyed, may, in a great meaſure, tend to ſtifle theſe ſentiments in the youthful heart.

An intelligent preceptor, ſtill keeping the ſame point in view, viz. the moral and religious improvement of his pupil, traverſes with him the wide field of univerſal hiſtory, and conducts him by the path traced out by Boſſuet, or ſome ſuch other man of genius. What is the ſtudy of hiſtory conſidered in a moral view, but a kind of commentary on man, on his knowledge and his errors, on his virtues and his vices, on his ſucceſſes and his misfortunes? Is it not alſo an explanation of the views of Providence, and a clear demonſtration of its influence on the fate of whole nations, and of each individual in particular? Proud reaſon may beſt learn from hiſtory, how little all the ſages of antiquity, ſome of whom were ſo much and juſtly admired, have contributed to the moral improvement of mankind, owing to their wiſdom not being founded on the fear of God. However excellent their precepts, they wanted power; being deſtitute of the determining motives of rewards promiſed, and puniſhments reſerved by the goodneſs and holineſs of God, for another life; though they enlightened the underſtanding, they were ignorant of the means whereby to ſupport it in its conviction againſt the ſo frequently re-iterated attacks of the ſenſes and paſſions; that however highly they have extolled

virtue, they were not able to convey to the heart and diſpoſition, the power of conſtantly loving and practiſing its precepts, nor to ſtrip vice of thoſe powerful attractions, which give it ſuch an empire over our corrupt nature; and with whatever force they have condemned the violence of the paſſions, they have never attacked them in their ſource, that is in the ſecret and irregular deſires of the heart. How eaſy will it be for the preceptor to point out the excellence, the ſublimity and the divinity, of the wiſdom of chriſtianity compared with that of human reaſon, whenever the two are properly contraſted in reading hiſtory. How much is hiſtory calculated to impreſs daily on the heart, the idea of a Providence who rewards and puniſhes, by all the proofs of this truth with which it abounds! At the ſame time, with what ſtrength of evidence does unpuniſhed vice and unrewarded virtue ſometimes point out to us a future ſtate, very different from the preſent; in which God will reward every one according to their works!

As the pupil's underſtanding opens, the courſe of his inſtruction, in religion, muſt be more extended. The preceptor muſt judge what, amongſt the many valuable books written for the purpoſe of religious inſtruction, may be proper for him to apply to the uſe of his pupil, according to the degree of capacity he knows him to poſſeſs. He ought to remember

continually, that youth muſt be inſtructed in an intelligible, as well as ſolid manner; with method, but not according to a ſyſtem, in which the ſubjects may be treated in a too dry or abſtract manner. It is certainly right that we ſhould ſtudy to acquire none but ſound and clear ideas, on the truths and duties of faith; but why are we particularly called upon to do this? That by reſpecting religion as coming from God, we may love it, willingly ſubmit to its precepts; and that we may learn to appreciate it, as the beſt gift God could beſtow on man, and the only road to real happineſs. Would it be proper that ſuch a ſcience ſhould be taught in an obſcure and diſguſting manner?

Poetry has particular charms for youth, and on this account, a preceptor ought to make an early uſe of this diſpoſition, and direct this prediliction for poetry to the improvement of the heart. The preceptor ſhould make his pupil familiar with the moſt beautiful paſſages contained in the works of our poets, in which they have expreſſed elegantly, noble ſentiments and principles. Beginning with fables and little tales, he muſt proceed to poems; and be attentive to make his pupil ſenſible of the beauties of a particular paſſage, or of a whole poem, by ſhort and judicious reflections; he will even inſenſibly make him get them by heart, by reading them frequently over with him. Suppoſe the pupil to be

acquainted with none but his native tongue; that has produced a ſufficient number of poets to engage the heart and mind of a child both agreeably and advantageouſly, under the direction of a maſter; who ſhould make him employ one hour daily, in reading good poetry; adding to that, the Spectator, or ſome other periodical work, good in its morality, eaſily underſtood and well written. By the help of his guide, the pupil would by this kind of reading, form his taſte, encreaſe his knowledge, and improve in the practice of virtue. It is lamented, and with reaſon, that ſo few young people are fond of reading; but this often ariſes from an improper choice of the books put into their hands. Their reading without reflection or advantage, is alſo complained of. But why are they not early taught to comprehend the advantages of reading? Why are not their minds early made ſenſible of what is good or beautiful in an author? Reading moſt aſſuredly is not in itſelf a virtue; it is an excellent means, however, of acquiring ſcience and virtue; and, conſequently, it ought to be conſidered as an eſſential part of a good education, to inſtruct young people how to read with taſte and feeling. Youth ſhould be accuſtomed to application; but does that mean that they ſhould be conſtrained to remain riveted to their books or their writing, four or five hours in a day, yet ſuppreſs their diſguſt? It is cer-

tain, that no young perſon will learn to apply, if application is not made agreeable to him by reaſon and the attraction of pleaſure. Reading is confeſſed to be one mode of habituating the pupil to think; he may be encouraged to make extracts of what he reads each day, adding ſhort reflections of his own. He will thus form to himſelf a little treaſure of knowledge, which he will collect with ſome pains, but which will alſo be attended with pleaſure; if an application of what he reads proportioned to his capacity is not required from him, reading will be to him but an idle paſtime, which will never be any way uſeful in developing his underſtanding: if he is required to apply, merely to acquire a habit of application, he will only be inſpired with an unfortunate averſion to reading. A conſtant care to make a profitable uſe of time, is a precious quality to which young people ought to be trained from their earlieſt years. They ought to be brought imperceptibly to a conſtant and regular employment of time, and to be accuſtomed as much as poſſible to account to themſelves at the cloſe of each day, for the uſe they have made of it. The preceptor muſt be careful to engage his pupils, in a pleaſing inſinuating manner to perform this examination faithfully, and they ſhould frequently write down their neglect or exactneſs in the employment of their time, that they may learn to bluſh or to rejoice, unſeen by any witneſs but their own

conſcience. An intelligent preceptor may do much, if without relaxing, he continually applies to his duty, and is not ſubjected to the interruption of cau-tious parents.

By means of reading, writing, arithmetic, muſic, drawing, and bodily exerciſes, the pupil ſhould be formed to attention and aſſiduous employment. The exact diſtribution of his time, and his punctual attention to it, will accuſtom him to the regularity he muſt one day uſe in regard to his affairs; and the care he muſt take of his books, his papers, letters, and every other matter which is of uſe to him, or neceſſary to his amuſement, will habituate him to a prudent œconomy. It is a great misfortune to us when we are not taught from our youth to be always uſefully employed, and to purſue each of our occupations at the time appropriated to them; and it is a great diſadvantage to young people of diſtinction, that other perſons are too frequently made to do for them, what they ought to learn to do for themſelves. Why do ſo many men of fortune abandon the care of their moſt important concerns to the vigilance and fidelity of dependents? For their convenience. Is not this improper regard to convenience the reſult of early education? Why cannot they endure any kind of fatigue, though it is frequently a neceſſary conſequence of their ſituation? What makes them diſlike all application to buſineſs? Let us reflect

on their mode of ſpending their earlieſt years, and we ſhall eaſily diſcover from whence this ariſes. How happens it, that a great man conſiders being ſerved with punctuality every hour of the day as a felicity and ſo great an advantage, that he would be in deſpair if deprived of it? It is becauſe in his youth he has not been wiſely taught to ſerve himſelf.

This diſpoſition to a lazy love of eaſe is an obſtacle to great virtues; and whoever is engaged in the education of children, ought to aim at preſerving them from it, by inuring them to application, and teaching them not to ſave themſelves any trouble which may conduce to the advantage of their mental or corporeal faculties, of their birth, or of their future ſituation. Delicacy of conſtitution being a hindrance to the exerciſe of the mental powers and of virtue, which every day encreaſes, the preceptor ought moſt carefully to guard againſt it in his pupil; to habituate him to conſider the morning hours as precious, in order to prevent him from indulging too long in bed, and giving himſelf up to the dangerous ſeduction of exceſſive ſleep. It is neceſſary the body ſhould be hardened by exerciſe, and that the pupil ſhould be prudently accuſtomed to endure the variations of weather, and the change of ſeaſons; that he ſhould be taught to derive ſatisfaction at his meals, rather from the pleaſures of converſation, than from the quality of his food; and to ſeaſon his re-

paſt by the recollection of a well performed taſk, and the appetite ariſing from labour.

An immoderate deſire of acquiring, as well as prodigality, are diſpoſitions not unuſual in youth. Œconomy and liberality, are on the other hand, virtues ſo eſſential in life, that they ſhould be impreſſed on young people as early as poſſible. Let a child learn under the direction of his preceptor the firſt rules of œconomy, by regulating his own little allowance. Let him be permitted to make purchaſes; but teach him to prefer neceſſaries to things merely agreeable, and the beſt to what is of inferior quality, though perhaps more ſhowy. He ſhould early be taught to ſave from his trifling gratifications, what may enable him to buy a good book, or to perform an act of charity with eaſe and pleaſure. The poor and the diſtreſſed ſhould be put in his way, that he may learn to be compaſſionate, and prompt to aſſiſt diſtreſs according to his ability. He ſhould never be ſo entirely without money as not, at leaſt, to have ſome pence to beſtow; and when he can furniſh a bit of bread to the hungry, or give drink and refreſhment to the thirſty, it ought to be a luxury to his yet tender mind, and a delightful ſight to his eyes. If he ſeems inclined to prodigality, this diſpoſition may be directed to liberality; and if he continues to give too profuſely and without judgment, take care never to repair the inconvenience he has brought on himſelf,

let him find himſelf reduced to the neceſſity of refuſing the ſolicitations of real diſtreſs, and unable to purchaſe what would be agreeable to him; to entertain a friend, or to reward the care and attention of ſome honeſt and attached ſervant. You will thus accuſtom your pupil to œconomy, you will make him attentive to it from motives too ſtriking to allow of his not conſidering it as indiſpenſable.

Gratitude, a diſpoſition to ſerve others, fidelity, the talent of keeping a ſecret, and of knowing how to behave with propriety to every one, are certainly qualities which ſhould be cultivated in young people, and which they ſhould be taught to put in practice on every occaſion; by ſetting before them the importance and beauty of doing ſo, as well as the hatefulneſs of contrary diſpoſitions. Thoſe expreſſions of grateful feeling, in words, which children are enjoined to uſe towards their parents, frequently convey to their minds only very ſuperficial ideas of gratitude. Teach them to ſhew their gratitude to their parents by their ſubmiſſion to orders which they are diſinclined to obey; and habituate them to recollect with pleaſure, the leaſt ſervice done them by any perſon whatever. Teach them that opportunities of doing good offices perpetually occur, and that it is frequently a more eſſential kindneſs to intercede for another, to give him good advice, or merely to ſympathize with him in affliction, than to

beſtow ſums of money; that the manner of conferring a favour enhances its value; that the eſteem we take a pleaſure in ſhewing others, the politeneſs with which we behave towards perſons of every rank, the gentle manner in which we expreſs a refuſal, when under a neceſſity of giving one, our attention to perſons in affliction who implore our aſſiſtance, or even to what thoſe ſay, who talk to us of their own concerns, often ſtands in lieu of the ſervices we have it not in our power to perform; and that we, therefore, can never want for occaſions, on which to exerciſe our benevolence. The pupil ſhould be taught this by his own experience, whenever opportunities offer. Can he poſſibly fail to comprehend that it is noble and proper to be ſincere and diſcreet; will he not already taſte this ſatisfaction in his intercourſe with his companions, his parents, all the members of his family and his inſtructors?

Can fathers and mothers poſſibly think themſelves at liberty to neglect giving a good education to their children, either by their own endeavours or by perſons of intelligence and integrity; making it a law to themſelves, to aſſiſt as much as poſſible at their childrens different exerciſes? A. Paulus Emilius and Auguſtus, did not conſider theſe duties as beneath them; and we might mention perſons of the higheſt rank, who conſidered them as matters of the moſt ſerious obligation.

It is impoſſible to do without rewards and puniſhments, and it is a branch of good education to employ them judiciouſly. We ought very ſeldom, and even then with great circumſpection, to reward children with what may flatter their vanity, or gratify their ſenſuality. Be ſparing of dainties, of playthings, of new clothes, and of exemptions from the accuſtomed hours of ſtudy, by way of encouragement in well doing; inſtead of which, be liberal to them of things truly uſeful, of books, of inſtruments and tools, inſtructing them in the uſe of them, as a reward of their aſſiduity and obedience. Of all the modes of rewarding, there is none more advantageous than teſtimonies of affection and approbation. A child cannot but feel itſelf excited to obey by a well placed approbation, and conceives a real deſire of pleaſing reaſonable people who watch over its conduct. We muſt allow, however, that the love of glory, by which ſome endeavour to act on the heart of a child, and to lead it to do nothing but what is praiſe-worthy, is a dangerous reſource in the hands of many parents and maſters who practice it. To be continually repeating to our pupils what a fine thing it is to ſurpaſs others, how much ſome particular young man of their own age is applauded, how another has attained to the firſt employments by his capacity, and another has gained univerſal eſteem and an immenſe fortune, by his application; what a re-

putation others have acquired by their writings, by their courage, by their integrity in buſineſs, to be continually repeating this, is to call the attention of youth to reputation, to exterior advantages, and to convenience more than is right and proper; it is to awaken envy and ambition in their ſouls. Sad conduct, in as much as it excites and nouriſhes pride, which, even when it ſhews itſelf by apparently virtuous actions, is in nothing preferable to avarice, and is poiſon to the mind. Does not the excellence of virtue and the approbation of heaven, offer the greateſt poſſible encouragement to thoſe who are attached to their duty? Do we find as we advance in life that reputation, diſtinctions, and honours, are ſo infallibly the attendants on virtue, as we are emphatically taught to conſider them in the days of our youth? Is there not a rewarding Being, the witneſs of all the good that we either think or do, on whom we may fix our views, and thus ſupport ourſelves in the career of duty by more than human motives? It is certainly neceſſary to inſpire youth with an ardent deſire to do every thing in the nobleſt and the moſt perfect manner, to be docile, laborious, ſincere, benevolent, modeſt, humble, ſober, grateful, prudent, and reaſonable; but inſtead of propoſing to them as a motive, the deſire of ſurpaſſing one another, and of riſing above their companions, we muſt teach them to regulate all their actions invariably

by that eternal and immutable law, which the Almighty has made known to us by reaſon and revelation; ſo that by conforming to it, they may obtain his approbation, and become worthy the affection of all thoſe who think properly. This is the only ſpecies of glory which we ought continually to urge them to ſeek. Let them feel no other emulation, have no other idea of honour, than obedience to God, a deſire to do what is right on every occaſion, without allowing any obſtacle to deter them from this conduct. Whoever acts in a praiſe-worthy manner that he may not ſee any ſuperior in goodneſs, any more prudent and more regular in moral conduct than himſelf, behaves well from a moſt unworthy motive; this motive may induce him who is actuated by it, to wiſh in ſecret, that others were leſs virtuous; he muſt ſee their imperfections with pleaſure, and grieve at whatever gives them any kind of advantage over him. What meanneſs of ſoul! This is, however, the mode of thinking which is ſo frequently and ſo ſtrongly inculcated on the minds of youth, from motives of vanity and emulation. We are taught to be virtuous from a point of honour, that is to ſay, that we begin by being vain and attached to whatever flatters our ſenſes, in order to make us afterwards perſons of merit. We are inſpired with a deſire of ſurpaſſing others, and at the ſame time with a contempt of thoſe whoſe talents

and powers are inferior to our own. We are taught to value ourſelves, as if we were likely to puſh the virtue of humility to exceſs, and whilſt our heads are filled with good principles, our hearts are ſwollen with pride. In forming ourſelves to arts, to ſciences, to trades, we are required to have in view the public admiration; ſo that our capacity and our reputation may ſtrike all beholders. Admirable and worthy end truly, for the Almighty to have placed us on the theatre of the world, and endowed us with ſo many excellent mental faculties! If the occupations which take up the greater part of our lives, have not virtue for their object, if they do not ſerve to exerciſe us in the practice of obedience towards the author of our being, what becomes of virtue? Can the proud man, in fact, be ſaid to poſſeſs any virtue ſince pride is not one? By propoſing the love of glory as a motive to young people, we only make little theatrical kings, who play their part well, that all ranks of ſpectators may clap and applaud them. We only make them habitual liars and hypocrites, who from vanity are deſirous of being what they are not, and to ſeem deſirous of becoming what they neither can nor would be, were it in their power. They ſtudy to conceal their faults, inſtead of owning and amending them. They take the air, the tone, the manners of the poliſhed and obliging man, and ſuppoſe themſelves like him; in which matter they

ſeek to deceive themſelves and to impoſe on others. Not to be out-done in merit, the ambitious young man depreciates thoſe who poſſeſs it, lays faults to their charge unjuſtly, divulges and magnifies thoſe of which they are really guilty. Thus he lays the firſt foundation of that deteſtable character, which values in no one but himſelf that which is really eſtimable; who cannot ſee with good will, merit in another, particularly in an equal or an inferior. Is this a character agreeable to reaſon? If ſo, reaſon is a deplorable guide to lead us to virtue. And if a good education requires that youth ſhould be inſpired with a deſire of glory, and excited by reward to act and think nobly; an education which inſpires nothing but mean ſentiments is hardly leſs dangerous to the heart; and may have fewer bad conſequences, and occaſion leſs evil in ſociety: as may be ſeen from the many examples in numberleſs families, ſhewing the bad effects of education founded on principles of vain glory. We are miſtaken when we ſuppoſe this vicious mode of education exiſts only in the houſes of the great. The moſt pitiful cottage has its ſpecies of pride, which extends its contagion to all the children who inhabit it.

With regard to neceſſary puniſhments, it ſeems only requiſite, that parents and preceptors ſhould always bear in mind what children ought to be puniſhed for, and the reaſon why they ought; that they

may judge clearly, of the nature and degree of the puniſhment moſt proper to inflict. Children are puniſhed for faults, that they may be deterred from committing them again. How attentive ſhould we be to chaſtiſe vice, at its earlieſt appearance, before it is unhappily become habitual! One ſingle puniſhment inflicted with a certain degree of ſolemnity, might have ſufficed, whilſt the frequent repetition of one much more ſevere, does not always attain its end. That child, whom all your ſeverity cannot at the age of ten years, cure of a diſpoſition to lying, to obſtinacy, to a ſpirit of revenge, might at four or five years old, on the very firſt appearance of theſe paſſions, have been preſerved from their tyranny with much leſs rigour; and perhaps by one ſingle ſerious puniſhment, if an unworthy negligence, or a tenderneſs, cruel in its conſequences, had not ſhut the eyes of thoſe about it to it's faults.

We ſhould learn to diſtinguiſh between faults which originate in the heart, and thoſe occaſioned by heedleſſneſs and want of judgment; between what is eſſentially contrary to good morals, and what offends only againſt certain eſtabliſhed rules of propriety. Do not ſhut your eyes to any fault which indicates a bad heart, never pardon it till the child becomes ſenſible of its odious nature. If the child is too young to underſtand reaſon, and comprehend what is ſaid to it concerning what deſerves puniſhment, in

ſuch and ſuch a bad action; let puniſhment give the inſtruction, whether by making the child to faſt for ſome time, by confining it, or, above all, by withdrawing from it every mark of affection. Delicacy of conſtitution, or even illneſs, ſhould never engage us to indulge the child in vicious diſpoſitions. They encreaſe the diſorder, and are themſelves one of the moſt dangerous ſpecies. Puniſh, therefore, with the utmoſt ſeverity, the evil diſpoſitions of a ſickly child, unleſs you would rather ſee it grow up a miſerable being, who will become a torment to himſelf and others, and an object of the indignation of God. If we allow the child to rebel againſt its parents or teachers, this vice, infinitely dangerous in its conſequences, will ſhew itſelf in every future ſituation of life in which the child may be placed. Rebellious towards its ſuperiors, towards its king, even towards God himſelf, it will trample law and order under foot, both in youth and manhood; and will endeavour to free itſelf from whatever obſtacle may impede the violence and impetuoſity of its paſſions, at the expence of reputation and even of life itſelf.

It is an attention moſt eſſential, never to correct children in a moment of paſſion. Wait till you are calm; make them comprehend that it is your affection for them which induces you to puniſh them, and let no interceſſions avail to prevent you from puniſhing, in their earlieſt infancy, whatever fault

ariſes from an evil diſpoſition of heart. A premeditated piece of deceit, which ſome have the folly to admire as a proof of cleverneſs, ſhould be ſeverely puniſhed the firſt time it is attempted to be put in practice. We often puniſh ſeverely, and reproach a child continually, for ſome fault committed againſt outward propriety, whilſt a cunning lie is paſſed over, though that calls for the ſevereſt puniſhment; and that a failure in the rules of good breeding calls merely for a ſlight reprimand. By acting thus, we teach children to think and feel in a manner as falſe as it is pernicious, as well as to bluſh without a cauſe. Small faults will alarm them, and real ones of ſerious magnitude, will cauſe them little or no emotion. That natural modeſty, the guardian of virtue, will only be employed on trifles and what concerns outward appearance, and not in repreſſing vicious inclinations and actions. Thus we ſee children, who tremble on account of a ſpot on their clothes, and whoſe faces are covered with bluſhes, if from inattention they commit ſome impropriety at table, lie boldly, ſupport their lie by imprecations, torment ſome poor animal in cold blood, inſult the infirmities of age or ſickneſs without a bluſh, and give the moſt opprobrious names to an honeſt ſervant. Make, therefore, a clear diſtinction between the nature of different faults, and let the child learn to bluſh and be alarmed on rational grounds. E-

very time that by negligence, bad examples, or improper punishments, you direct badly or weaken in the child's mind, that admirable natural disposition which makes it blush at what appears criminal in its eyes, you act contrary to its greatest and truest interests, and, consequently, against the rules essential to a good education. One of the wisest of these rules is certainly this, as expressed by the ancients, that we should respect children. To conform our practice to this rule, we must conduct ourselves towards them with all necessary regard and circumspection; let your words, your actions, even your looks, be as well regulated before them, as you could wish them to be in the presence of the wisest, the most religious man, and in the highest station in life.

An education carried on with this strict attention, till the age when young people enter into the world; and that according to our knowledge of their natural dispositions, and the circumstances of their birth and fortune, we are on the point of engaging them to embrace some decided plan of life; an education thus attended to, may lay the foundation of solid happiness during the whole of their lives. They will not only be better fitted for various employments, but still happier independently of outward circumstances; their hearts will be filled with nobler sentiments, they will find themselves at all times

well prepared, and, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, ripe for eternity. I own that an education, perfect and complete in all points, can hardly be obtained but in families of fortune and conſequence, and requires certain circumſtances favourable to its completion. But let us not be diſcouraged. Do we not ſee in the moſt common ſituations, young girls under the direction of a mother, who poſſeſſes only a ſound judgment, and an upright heart, young boys conducted by a father, who has neither place nor learning, but who has good ſenſe, experience and virtue, receive a more virtuous and uſeful education, than that which is given in many families of ſuperior rank, where it appears to be more refined and perfect? This advantage is, without doubt, chiefly owing to the efficacy of good example, to the natural talents of the children, and to the bleſſing of God, who ſeconds the aſſiduous care of thoſe parents who bring up their children in the fear of him. Parents who without being diſcouraged, teach their children by their good principles and daily example, to think juſtly and live well; who inſtruct them in a manner fitted to impreſs their minds, muſt obtain a reſpectable authority, which inſtructs even by ſilence, and has weight even in their abſence; they muſt acquire the affection of their children, which is the ſtrongeſt ſtimulus to obedience. Such fathers and mothers have a tenderneſs for their children, and an attach-

ment to their duties, which makes them ingenious in regard to many things, concerning which others are leſs clear ſighted; and their piety towards God, makes them employ a vigilance as ſevere and indefatigable, as that of others is relaxed and ill ſupported. Hence it is that perſons who poſſeſs good ſenſe and good hearts, ſucceed well in the education of their families. We ſee ſome, who though in the loweſt ſtation, nevertheleſs, bring up their children to be uſeful members of ſociety and enlightened chriſtians. For, after all, let us ſuppoſe men entirely ignorant of arts and ſciences, paſſing their lives in obſcurity, and unknown in the world; if they are inſtructed in the path which leads to ſalvation, and to him to whom they are indebted for its being traced out to them; who obtains for them the pardon of their ſins and peace of conſcience; provided that, enlightened by religion, they know how to love God above all things, and their neighbour as themſelves; and that, conformably to theſe great duties, they live and act each one in his vocation; is not this ſufficient for their comfort and tranquillity? They have all the knowledge requiſite for the attainment of heaven, for every purpoſe of man's being placed in this world; all that is neceſſary to their eternal felicity.

Let us eſteem ourſelves happy if we have received a good education; but let us remember at the ſame

time, we ſhall de highly culpable if we do not impart it to thoſe who derive their exiſtence from us, or who are confined to our care. If education is the eſſential duty of parents, let them humbly implore the bleſſing of heaven, not truſting to their own underſtandings. Can we ſuppoſe that God will refuſe to ſecond thoſe labours which have for their object, to form to virtue ſouls which he has created capable of devoting themſelves to it? Laſtly, if education is ſo great an advantage to children, it is incumbent on them to receive it with a docility which may prove them ſenſible of its value, and to be careful that the ſeeds of virtue, which have been ſown in their minds, may not be ſmothered by the tares of falſe opinions, irregular deſires, and dangerous aſſociates. Young people, to whom I addreſs myſelf, liſten to theſe words, "He that feareth the Lord, will honour his father, and will do ſervice unto his parents, as to his maſters. Honour thy father and mother, both in word and deed, that a bleſſing may come upon thee from them. For the bleſſing of the father eſtabliſheth the houſes of children, but the curſe of the mother rooteth out foundations."* "Whoever loveth inſtruction loveth knowledge, but he that hateth reproof is brutiſh."†

* Eccleſiaſticus, chap. iii. v. 7. 8. 9.

† Proverbs, xii. v. 1.

N. B. The reader will find, at the end of thefe leſſons, a diſcourſe, entitled, Inſtructions from a father to his ſon, on his going to the univerſity, which ſerves as a ſequel to this leſſon. It was uſed for this purpoſe by the author, who publiſhed it during his life time, in a collection of various pieces.

TWENTY-FOURTH LESSON.

ON THE DUTIES OF RELATIONSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP.

ON RELATIONSHIP.

As thoſe who are connected with us by near ties of relationſhip, have a particular influence on our comfort, it is one of the primary duties of ſociety, impoſed on us by God, after the care of our own families, to intereſt ourſelves for thoſe who are connected with us by ties of blood. Enmities between relations, being alſo generally the moſt violent and implacable; and only to be avoided by a conſtant diſpoſition to do ſervice, by indulgence, by uprightneſs of conduct, by modeſty, and by good will, theſe virtues are particularly obligatory on perſons connected by relationſhip. It too often happens that

theſe duties are oppoſed by ſelf intereſt. The pretenſions which one relation thinks he has a right to form to the diſadvantage of another, are the unfortunate ſources of diſſention; and becauſe too little circumſpection is uſed in familiar intercourſe with thoſe of our own family, it frequently happens that we do not ſufficiently reſpect one another. With the beſt intentions, it is impoſſible for us to perform the duties of relationſhip as we ought, if we are not modeſt and equitable in regard to what we require from our relations; and if the familiar intercourſe we have with them, which is authoriſed by the ties of blood, is not wiſely managed and accompanied with proper attentions. We expect too much from nature, if we believe that relationſhip always implies congeniality of character; it is but too certain, that our tempers do not always ſympathiſe. Though reaſon leads us to love and oblige our relations preferably to others, and to aſſociate with them more intimately, we ought, at the ſame time, to value and reſpect every means dictated by prudence and duty, for the maintenance of mutual peace and happineſs in this little ſociety. However well intentioned we may be, it is not always in our power to contribute to the advantage of general ſociety, or of many of its members at the ſame time; but as to thoſe who form a part of our own families, we may begin very early to ſhew them regard, compaſſion, obedience, reſpect,

attentions to aſſiſt them with our advice, do them kind offices, ſet them good examples; which, turning to their advantage, will at the ſame time, make us beneficial to that general ſociety into which they will ſome day enter, or are perhaps already incorporated. The particular circumſtances of theſe near connections muſt regulate the nature and degree of our particular obligations. Whatever they may be, it is certain they will afford an ample field for the exercife of our virtue, and that we ſhall acquit ourſelves very badly of the duties of relationſhip, if we have not learnt to conduct ourſelves with integrity and good ſenſe. Nothing ſeems ſo much to excuſe us from the performance of theſe duties, as the ingratitude and intereſted views of thoſe who are the objects of them, and yet we ought more than others to bear with their ingratitude, and to be moſt zealous in correcting the reigning vices of our families, as long as there remains any means of effecting this, which we have not already tried in vain; I do not ſay that we ſhould encourage any one in his ingratitude by a weak good nature, but that we ought to endeavour by patience and greatneſs of mind, to inſpire the ungrateful perſon with ſhame and repentance, ſo that affection may be renewed in his heart. As to vicious perſons of our family, they ought to be the more the objects of our ſolicitude, as we are beſt acquainted with their character; and that ſtran-

gers withdraw from them and refuſe to aſſiſt them. We certainly cannot feel the ſame affection for a vicious relation, as for one who is virtuous; but conſidering ſuch a one as an unfortunate member of that family in which God has placed us, the painful duty of endeavouring to reclaim ſuch a perſon, ſhould be conſidered by us as a tribute required by God, though our exertions are too frequently unſucceſsful.

We have not always the power of ſerving our relations, but we can always in our intercourſe with them behave with affability, with a benevolent and obliging attention, and with indulgence towards their trifling faults. When thoſe who are connected by blood are thus diſpoſed, much is done towards ſecuring the comfort of the connection. If we have not the power of being effectually uſeful to the members of our family, our good qualities may, even at a diſtance from them, procure them ſome ſatisfaction, and they may derive advantage from our example. Though in an inferior ſituation, our good conduct may do honour to thoſe of our relations, who fill honourable places in the ſervice of the ſtate; as ſome ſhare of the reſpect attached to their ſtation, may reflect on us. There is more than pride, there is cruelty in being aſhamed of the poor and abject ſituation of worthy relations. As in every family, certain prejudices or failings prevail, it will ever be come

rational people, and the greateſt honour they can do their families, to labour inceſſantly to overcome theſe ruling failings and prejudices.

However ſtrong our obligation is to procure the advantage of our relations, this private affection muſt not be allowed to encroach on that benevolence which is due to mankind in general, and to degenerate into an intereſted partiality, prejudicial to the public good. To endeavour to puſh our relations, who have little merit, into employments to the excluſion of perſons of much greater worth and ability, only becauſe they are related to us; to enrich them becauſe we are weakly partial to them, whilſt we leave much more deſerving perſons in want, whoſe diſtreſs is much greater, merely on the pretence of aſſiſting our relations, is an injuſtice committed againſt ſociety; a double injuſtice, in as much as we injure our relations by procuring them places and riches, the duties attending which they know not how to diſcharge; and that by neglecting their ſuperiors in merit, we injure the public peace and order. A partial recommendation of thoſe with whom we are connected by blood, is (to ſay no worſe of it,) a pious fraud: who would dare to juſtify it to the public, or to the tribunal of his own conſcience? One who is attached to his relations, ought no more than a wife and virtuous friend, to allow himſelf from motives of private attachment, to

wound the general rules of juſtice. Partiality in regard to our relations being but too common, we ſhould condemn this abuſe by our example, and fly from every appearance of it.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

The ties of blood are the work of nature, and they are ſtrengthened by an interchange of mutual good offices. The connections of friendſhip are alſo directed by nature, but they are more dependent on our choice and our moral qualities. True friendſhip always ſuppoſes a reciprocal merit in the parties, or, at leaſt, the reputation of it; whereas it is not always by their merit that our relations can gain our affection; however good their hearts are, they may not be in uniſon with ours. We may regard them much, without finding ourſelves drawn towards them by that attraction which ſolicits us to the attachment of friendſhip. My friend cannot be ſuch without a conformity of virtuous inclinations which binds us to each other; but my relation has a claim to my regard, though he may not have theſe ſame virtuous inclinations, and is not directed by the ſame views as I am. On this account, we may ſay, "that friendſhip is a more noble and intimate connection than relationſhip, and that there is a friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother."*

* Swift and Gilborn.

Conſidering friendſhip merely as to its conformity to a natural inclination, and in as much as it is diſtinct from univerſal benevolence, it is neither a vice nor a virtue. Viewed as to the ſatisfaction it procures us, it is the moſt precious advantage belonging to ſocial life. If conſidered as a tie which more cloſely unites noble minds, who are equally deſirous to promote their mutual happineſs and that of others, it is both a ſource of happineſs and of virtue.

Friendſhip has often been extravagantly praiſed to the detriment of univerſal benevolence; and the violence of a natural inclination, felt by two perſons for each other, dignified with the name of heroic virtue. A certain forgetfulneſs of ourſelves, in favour of a friend, has been conſidered as a prodigy of virtue, though it frequently originates merely in a lucky obſtinacy of character, an impulſe of ſelf love, of intereſt, or natural temper. When I love one, in whom I remark a conformity of thoughts and ſentiments, a character reſembling my own in its principal features, a countenance which pleaſes me, and announces a mind which I feel myſelf inclined to cultivate, is that in me a virtue, is it ſelf love, or merely natural ſympathy? When I do a ſervice to any one to whom I am intimately attached, whoſe diſpoſitions delight me, who returns my affection, and who, by what he does and ſays to

prove the intereſt he takes in my happineſs, when I do this perſon a ſervice, even to my own diſadvantage, when I ſacrifice to him a part of my uſual amuſements, that I devote my time and the powers of my mind and fortune to him, is there moſt of virtue in all this, or of natural impulſe; moſt of the faithful diſcharge of a duty, or of compliance with the dictates of a natural propenſity? On what account do we ſo highly prefer this perſon. His inclinations and his views coincide with mine, and I find my happineſs in his attachment to me. Are we not in this, much under the influence of ſelf love? What is being willing to die for our Pylades, but that we find ſo much comfort in his friendſhip, that without him life would be a burthen, and that to avoid this misfortune, our own death would be a leſs evil to us than his? The moſt violent enthuſiaſm of friendſhip, which is only a ſimilarity of inclination ariſing from conſtitution, cannot in itſelf be a virtue; whatever brilliant appearance it may aſſume, it is purely a rational inſtinct. I go ſtill farther, and ſay, that it may degenerate into a crime; and thoſe ſacrifices made to friendſhip, which are ſo much celebrated by the ancients, have often been torn from the altars of univerſal benevolence and equity. We may become guilty of injuſtice to ourſelves, and towards various members of ſociety, by our extreme zeal to devote

our time, our fortune, our minds, and our hearts to a friend, and the delight ariſing from his ſociety.

Chriſtian morality has been reproached, that it has given no precept in favour of friendſhip; and Lord Shafteſbury amongſt others, has on this account taxed it with imperfection. This reproach may eaſily be refuted by what has already been ſaid. If we conſider friendſhip as an effect of nature and of the connections we form, which includes reciprocal ſervices and inclinations, we cannot make it a general obligation, or a duty, equally binding at all times and in all ſituations. Being a natural propenſity, it is needleſs to preſcribe it where this propenſity already exiſts, and it would be vain to preſcribe it where it does not exiſt naturally. If we conſider friendſhip relatively to virtue, its duties are as certainly comprehended under thoſe of univerſal benevolence, as that the fruits of a fertile branch adhere to the trunk and to the roots of the tree. Am I to enquire, whether I am to love my friend ſincerely and faithfully, when I am commanded thus to love all mankind? And can I be doubtful whether I owe to one in whoſe favour my heart pleads, with whoſe virtues and wants I am particularly well acquainted, and who particularly intereſts me by his kind diſpoſition towards me, by the tender intereſt he takes in my pains and pleaſures, and all he does to prove it; once more I repeat, can I be doubtful, whether I

ought to do for my friend what I expect and promiſe myſelf he will do for me, according to all the rules of equity? What, in fact, is the brotherly love preſcribed by our religion, but the nobleſt and earlieſt friendſhip? Who are thoſe which the goſpel calls our brethern? Men united by the ties of one faith and one principle of virtue; who propoſe to themſelves to perform the ſame duties. Who are the friends which reaſon acknowledges for ſuch? Thoſe who find in themſelves a ſimilitude of ideas in eſſentials, of inclinations, and of views, and who apply themſelves to encreaſe it. Brotherly love is, therefore, a friendſhip of a ſuperior order, ſince it pre-ſuppoſes us animated on both ſides with holy and pious diſpoſitions, and does not exclude natural equality amongſt thoſe who are united by it. The ſcripture commands us particularly to love our benefactors and be grateful to them. Is not a true friend a conſtant benefactor? Do I not, conſequently, owe him a particular regard? Was not St John beloved with preference by his divine maſter, on account of the gentleneſs of his character? Had not St Paul a particular affection for Timothy?

The command to brotherly love goes ſo far as to preſcribe to us to lay down our lives for our brethern, if their ſalvation requires it. Is not this the moſt ſublime and moſt difficult effect of friendſhip? Was it not in reality more worthy of religion to inculcate

univerſal benevolence, to be practiſed by us as a duty towards God, and to which we have ſo little diſpoſition, than to inſiſt on that particular benevolence which conſtitutes friendſhip, to which nature itſelf ſolicits us, and which ſo eaſily degenerates into partiality of feeling, and even ſelf love; and makes us ſo indifferent or unjuſt towards others on ſo many occaſions? When, therefore, friendſhip is confined to that mutual agreement of tempers, and is founded on a conformity of character, originating in our natures, it cannot be conſidered an eſſential, univerſal, duty; and when we only follow that voice of nature which tends to unite our hearts, this ſtill is not a virtue.

But how great are the charms of friendſhip, when it is equally founded on nature and on virtue! Separate friendſhip from the idea of virtue, you lower its value, and its divine brilliancy will frequently be loſt in the darkneſs of intereſt and a mean ſelf love. Suppoſe even that virtue was not eſſentially united with friendſhip, robbers united by the ſame views, would in that caſe, be laudable friends, ſince they labour for the general advantage, and frequently with a certain equity and reciprocal affection.

True friendſhip is that mutual eſteem and attachment of virtuous ſouls, who from the conformity of their inclinations, of their intereſts and views, which ought on both ſides to be ſincere and noble, unite

themſelves more intimately to one another. In ſome meaſure, therefore, we may cultivate a variety of friendſhips, or we may form but one, which will generally ariſe from the moſt entire agreement of minds. As to the love which attaches us to one of a different ſex, though it includes friendſhip, it differs from it, in as much as it has but one perſon for its object, and excludes a third from their union.

If friendſhip unites together reaſon and virtue, if it is founded on the good qualities of the heart and underſtanding, and on propriety of conduct; if the well judged aſſiſtance it gives from duty and from a principle of ſincerity and fidelity, ſerve to ſtrengthen it; in a word, if it is a ſympathy of nature, reaſon and virtue, nothing can be imagined more precious and of greater advantage to a man of ſenſibility. When in the ſociety of a worthy friend, if we poſſeſs happineſs, to ſhare this happineſs with him and to feel aſſured that it conſtitutes a part of his; to communicate to him our cares, and to feel that he compaſſionates our ſufferings, and that he leſſens their weight by the tender intereſt he takes in them; how much ſatisfaction does friendſhip afford us in proſperity, and how great a conſolation is it in adverſity! Is not our happineſs doubled when we can communicate it to our friend; and our uneaſineſs, is it not relieved the moment we can confide it to him? Abſent from him, if any fortunate event befall us, we

enjoy it doubly whilſt we haſten to inform him of it. At a diſtance from him, if we ſee ourſelves threatened by ſome misfortune, we feel our anxiety calmed by the idea of repoſing our cares in his boſom. The attachment of a wife and virtuous friend does the greateſt credit to our heart, and his eſteem puts the ſeal to our probity. His confidence encourages our own ſincerity, his views enoble our own; he generouſly puts himſelf in our place; ſupports us in our enterpriſes by his approbation and advice, recalls us gently from our errors, and raiſes us up if we fall; his noble example ſerves as a leſſon to us; he obtains for us the bleſſing of heaven by his prayers; It is on him we depend moſt in our misfortunes, as he is alſo the perſon who feels moſt ſenſibly whatever good befals us: thus he ſhews himſelf on all occaſions; and if fate ſeparates us, ſtill, though diſtant, he exiſts for us. We can truſt our ſecret, our fortune, the fortune of our children, or our wife, to his noble mode of thinking. His ſincerity, his zeal, his information, his taſte, his judgment, united to his affection for us, make his friendſhip ſo highly delightful to us, that it is equally uſeful and ſatisfactory. A worthy friend is the moſt precious gift of heaven, and one which we can never ſufficiently acknowledge. If our intimacies are formed in our early youth, if they accompany us in the career to manhood; if they ſerve as ſupports of our virtue till death, we

may look on them as guardian angels appointed us on earth by the Almighty.

If, then, it is true, that real friendſhip procures us all theſe advantages and ſo much ſatisfaction, is it not a ſacred duty we owe ourſelves, to endeavour to deſerve its continuance? We muſt endeavour to be what we eſteem and love in our friend, and follow exactly the path which may lead us to him, the path of merit, of virtue, and of manners, which unite propriety and agreeableneſs. Whoever wiſhes to acquire a friend who thinks nobly, muſt poſſeſs in themſelves that way of thinking which may deſerve affection. With real worth, and a truly honeſt heart, we may reſt aſſured our merit will not fail to attract the regard of ſome one of ſimilar diſpoſitions.

Generous minds diſtinguiſh one another amidſt the crowd of common minds, who ſeek to unite merely from views of intereſt or vanity. Frequently a gracious expreſſion of countenance, in which we think we diſcover the character of the mind, induces us to ſeek a particular perſon's friendſhip; ſometimes it is from a ſervice done us, that we become acquainted with the goodneſs of his heart, or ſome converſation which announces to us a manner of thinking and feeling which particularly affects us. Sometimes it is from propriety of conduct and manners, which indicates to us a character from which we promiſe

ourſelves a happy intimacy. The firſt appearance does not perhaps always pleaſe, nor promiſe what our heart makes us deſire to find in a friend; a nearer acquaintance, however, diſcovers to us the merit of a character ſuch as we deſire. Thus nature invites us to friendſhip by various means, ſometimes by the powerful attraction of a ſudden ſympathy; ſometimes by ſervices which gain upon us inſenſibly; ſometimes by intimacies gradually becoming cloſer and cloſer. No one is better qualified to deſerve the title of friend, than one who has a good and feeling heart, joined to a ſound underſtanding and delicate mind; who unites to the dignity of virtue the agreeableneſs of outward appearance and manners; and to the information acquired by cultivating the ſciences, that more precious knowledge drawn from the pure ſource of religion. A vain, covetous, intereſted mind, is not formed to maintain friendſhip; though by aſſuming a falſe appearance it may give birth to it. He who does not ſufficiently reſpect himſelf, can he be well diſpoſed towards his friend? On the other hand, even a good heart without delicacy and politeneſs of manners, can give very little value to friendſhip. The good taſte we derive from the ſtudy of the ſciences and fine arts, not only ſerves us in regard to whatever relates to our intercourſe in life, but influences our moſt intimate connections; in as much as it chaſtens that frankneſs which might

be diſguſting in the eyes of our friends; it makes our familiarity circumſpect, and leads us to avoid in our advice and our good offices, all appearance of authority and ſupercilioufneſs. By means of this delicacy we prevent many cauſes of diſcontent with our friends; we embelliſh the duties of the man of probity; and without this purified taſte, the beſt friend is frequently troubleſome, or ceaſes to be an agreeable companion.

The beſt heart is not without its little imperfections which are derived from education, or natural diſpoſition. It is equally the duty of friendſhip to rectify and treat them with indulgence. The faults of our friends ſhould be diminiſhed, and almoſt vaniſh, in our eyes by the conſideration of their good qualities: to be to me as a ſecond ſelf, he cannot be free from failings. Our friends are men, and have all neceſſarily their imperfections: let their excellent qualities make us bear with them, at the ſame time that we uſe our endeavours to mend them with all poſſible delicacy. The goodneſs of their hearts makes them uſe the ſame freedom with us, and pay us the ſame attention; they enoble our ſentiments by their own, and enlighten our minds by their knowledge. If we are ſo happy as to find a worthy friend, we muſt endeavour to improve our amiable and generous diſpoſitions by his ſociety, otherwiſe we loſe the greateſt advantage of friendſhip; we con-

vert what ought to be wholeſome food into a kind of intemperate pleaſure. Why do we form intimacies, if it is not with a view to encreaſe our happineſs by the confidence ariſing from a cloſe connection? Can we ever fear to become too accompliſhed and to act too rationally? Do not freſh occaſions perpetually ariſe, in which we are called upon to prove ourſelves friends, that is to ſay, by proper aſſiſtance, by our advice, by our example, our conſolations, and the agreeableneſs of our ſociety? What is moſt advantageous to us in particular and to ſociety in general in friendſhip is preciſely, that it contributes to make us better, and more fit to fulfil our great and eternal deſtination. Whoever will not ſacrifice a lightly conceived opinion to friendſhip, and ſome fault, gently pointed out to him by a friend, and feel obliged to that friend for affording him encouragement in the diſcharge of his duties, becauſe his pride refuſes it; whoever, in a word, is not capable of allowing with pleaſure the ſuperiority of his friend, and is not willing to conſider him as one from whom he may receive uſeful leſſons, has not ſentiments worthy of friendſhip; whatever merit he may otherwiſe poſſeſs, he wants that noble diſtruſt of himſelf, to which we ought to be conducted by the hand of a generous friend, without any repugnance on our part. It is frequently to worthy friends, that many deluded hearts owe their eſta-

bliſhment in the path of virtue, from which they had begun to deviate; it is often in his friend that a young man, who would have proceeded very ſlowly in procuring himſelf a comfortable eſtabliſhment, finds a companion in his labours, both zealous and courageous; who ſhews him the way to attain it, and keeps him ſteadily in it. May every one who reads this have to congratulate himſelf on the poſſeſſion of ſuch a friend, or be the model of ſuch a one himſelf! Young people, you ſtand the more in need of being guided by the counſels of a virtuous friendſhip, in as much as you are eaſily impoſed on, and that you are apt to go aſtray, when abandoned to your own guidance.

What uſe do we derive from youth, when without a friend to adviſe us? We know not which to chuſe of two ways preſented to us, and long undecided between vice and virtue, we determine at laſt, but it is frequently only to make one falſe ſtep after another, in the ſolitary path we have choſen. Yes, it is not a trifling wiſh I form for you, young people, in wiſhing you a wiſe and virtuous friend; there is not one of you for whom I do not form this wiſh from the bottom of my heart, and who ought not each day to implore God on this ſubject. To give their full extent to my wiſhes, may ſuch a friendſhip ſhed its ſweets on the whole courſe of your lives, and

make you reap the precious fruits of it beyond the grave, and to all eternity!

I have already hinted that it is objected to religion, that its morality does not comprehend the duties of friendſhip. Can there be a more unjuſt reproach! All things equal, which perſon will make the beſt friend, he who is ſuch merely on the principles of reaſon, or the friend who is not only governed by rational, but alſo by Chriſtian principles? When the heart is ſo formed as to feel good diſpoſitions, in regard to all mankind, is it poſſible it ſhould not feel favourable ſentiments towards thoſe who moſt reſemble it? Xenophon ſays, that the moſt intrepid ſoldier, is he who moſt fears the Gods. Who is likely to be the beſt and moſt faithful friend? Certainly not the merely moral man, without religion. His virtue and his friendſhip are doubtful. The rational and the pious man is he on whom we can beſt depend, he is the ſolid friend who is ſo for this life and the next. A virtuous and pious female friend, who adorns her graces with innocence and purity of manners, is the trueſt, the beſt friend, we can deſire, and who deſerves to be ſought moſt eagerly. If heaven favours us ſufficiently to unite us to ſuch a one by marriage, the poſſeſſion of ſuch a companion for life, may be ranked one of the greateſt poſſible felicities. Thus may alſo be conſidered the acquiſition of a male friend, who will from your

own experience teach you to ſay with me, " Happy is the young man, who early in life aſſociates to himſelf, in the path of wiſdom and virtue, a friend who values them, and agrees with him in propoſing them to himſelf as his chief aim ; and whoſe courage leads him to ſhare whatever danger and difficulty they may encounter together in their progreſs ! Who ſerves as a ſpur to him when he heſitates, follows him ſtep by ſtep when he proceeds with the greateſt ardour, awakens him when he is diſpoſed to allow his mind to fall into a dangerous ſlumber, warns him of every peril with which he is menaced, calls upon him to avoid it, and inſtructs him in his duty, before he has had the misfortune to violate it !"

Let us conclude, finally, that if ſuch is the advantage of poſſeſſing a truly eſtimable and virtuous man for our friend, it is a ſtill greater happineſs to poſſeſs the friendſhip of celeſtial intelligences ; and the height of felicity to be able to conciliate the good will of the moſt powerful and beſt of beings ; to have the Almighty for our friend ! This is a happineſs to which religion teaches us we may aſpire, and which it alſo enables us to attain.

TWENTY-FIFTH LESSON.

ON MARRIAGE,

AND

ON THE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

NATURE has traced out the character of conjugal love with ſo much care and wiſdom, that reaſon can eaſily take in the model and work upon it. Conſidering the propagation of mankind, and the eſtabliſhment of each man's comfort in particular, as the great end of that mutual inclination towards each other, which God has impreſſed on the two ſexes, no means can be imagined more conformable to reaſon and duty in regard to this double object, than the conjugal union. Without this union, our propenſity to love would be ungovernable, and would ſoon become the moſt pernicious paſſion; inſtead of ſerving to ſupport our nobleſt inclinations to benevolence, to friendſhip, and eſteem, it would deſtroy

them and carry deſtruction into ſociety, far from reparing its loſes. Whoever will not reſtrain this natural propenſity within the laws of marriage, as the ſon of Sirach expreſſes himſelf, "He that cleaveth to harlots will become impotent; moths and worms ſhall devour him; a debauched man ſhall be exterminated, and made an example of puniſhment. The heat of his paſſion is a fire which cannot be extinguiſhed till he is entirely conſumed."

As far as we are unable to conceive that public tranquillity, and the education of unfortunate children abandoned to themſelves, can ſubſiſt independently of a permanent union between huſband and wife, ſo far it is eaſy to comprehend that polygamy encreaſes the embarraſſments of life, inſtead of adding to its comforts. It is eaſy to comprehend that the diſſolution of marriage, if it depended on the caprice, the whim, and the inconſtancy of each individual, could not but have the moſt fatal conſequences, and muſt deſtroy the happineſs of families and the public tranquillity from their foundations. Every perſon who, on pretence of making a better choice, would ſeparate from his wife, to unite himſelf to another, would ſoon find ſome reaſon for breaking theſe new ties in order to form ſome other, and ſoon after to break through them alſo. To pretend that this liberty is a law of nature, would be to impeach the wiſdom of its author. All our natural

propenſities ſhould have their limits, and above all others, this is neceſſary in regard to the paſſion of love one of the moſt impetuous, and to which a curb is moſt eſſentially neceſſary; otherways it degenerates and corrupts the heart, the morals, and the underſtanding. This would infallibly happen, or, at leaſt, there is every probability that it would, if it depended ſolely on the caprices of love to form or break the bonds of hymen. It cannot, indeed, be denied, but that the private comfort of particular perſons, may require the diſſolution of marriage. But if it was to be permitted in one caſe, thouſands would think themſelves authoriſed to avail themſelves of the example, on the moſt frivolous and unjuſtifiable reaſons, and then the conjugal union would more than any other be contracted lightly, and from the moſt unworthy motives. Marriage in reſtraining love to one object, amply compenſates to us for the liberty of which it deprives us, of attaching ourſelves to others. Inſtead of being loſers by it, our hearts are great gainers. We find ourſelves united to a perſon who is the object of our affections, and whoſe heart exiſts for us alone, as ours does for her. Our propenſity to friendſhip and mutual love which, had it no fixed object, would pervert itſelf, and leave only fatal impreſſions on the minds of perſons of either ſex, obtains in marriage an object the poſſeſſion of which conſtitutes the happineſs

both of love and friendſhip. Thus two perſons ſelected by marriage from general ſociety to form one in particular, animated by a reciprocal and faithful affection, form the happineſs of each other, and find in the performance of their mutual duties, freſh ſources of attachment and ſatisfaction, which influence alſo the good of the ſtate and of ſociety in general. However heavy we may chuſe to ſuppoſe the ties of marriage, it is a ſufficient anſwer to ſuch unfounded opinions, that the comforts of a well aſſorted marriage, are very ſuperior to the troubles which ariſe from it: they are even converted into ſatisfactions, and ſerve to maintain mutual affection. It is enough that the complaints alledged againſt this ſtate, prove much leſs the imperfection attached to it, than it does that of mankind and, in particular, the errors and vices of married perſons. Can we impute to marriage, the misfortunes and uneaſineſſes, with which an union, formed without conſulting reaſon and virtue, without circumſpection in choice, without examining whether the minds and diſpoſitions of the heart are in union, will probably be attended? To view marriage merely as an aſylum in which intereſt, luxury, vanity, and ambition, may take refuge and find reſources, and then complain that we are not happy, is to complain of a juſtly incurred puniſhment. When a marriage, entered into under the happieſt auſpices, is not accompanied by

a conſtant attention to regulate conjugal affection conformably to the reſpectable views we ought to propoſe to ourſelves; when eſteem does not continually re-animate the tenderneſs ſubſiſting between married people; that it is not cemented by obliging attentions and faithful ſervices, and that mutual indulgence for trifling failings does not put them on their guard againſt whatever may occaſion diſunion; to reproach marriage as giving riſe to diſguſt, to chagrin and diſagreement, is to reproach the ſtate with what ariſes wholly from the want of ſenſe and conduct in thoſe who engage in it, and who are unhappy by their own fault.

To conceive for marriage the reſpect which is its due, all that is neceſſary is, to obſerve how two perſons rationally attached to each other help and mutally ſupport one another in every adverſity, and heighten each other's reliſh of every comfort. Such is the bleſſing which ſprings from a virtuous conjugal affection, and ſpreads itſelf over the whole life of thoſe whom it unites. Marriage can never conſtitute the felicity of fools. Its tie muſt form between two worthy hearts an attachment as laſting as life, and an united agreement in the practice of the ſocial virtues. When in forming an union ſo intimate theſe objects are neglected, or that thoſe who form it are incapable of fulfilling the duties they require, they diſhonour marriage, and violate its moſt ſacred

rights. As this tie is the ſtricteſt of all unions, and as fidelity in conjugal love is founded on mutual promiſes, and in the very nature of this attachment, it follows that at the tribunal of reaſon, a breach of its fidelity is a great crime, and that whoever is guilty of it ſins doubly, by his licentiouſneſs and by the greateſt injuſtice. It is remarkable that the moſt ſavage nations have conſidered and ſtill conſider the rights of marriage as ſacred; ſo much ſo that there is a nation in Africa, whoſe manners differ very little from the brutes, amongſt whom, however, there exiſts a law which puniſhes adultery with death. Why do not the contemners of the law of nature, who found their contempt on the example of ſavages, amongſt whom they pretend it does not exiſt, advert to this example in regard to the inviolability of marriage?

The more advantages or evils reſult from this union, the more we ought to be cautious in our choice; the more culpable alſo are thoſe who force us to contract it, or who oppoſe our contracting it; thus doing violence to our inclinations from pretended good motives. In as much as it is true, that love cannot continue if unſupported by real merit, we ought ſurely to endeavour, both before and after we have choſen a companion for life, to make ourſelves worthy of her attachment. A man who has neither knowledge or capacity in matters which

concern him, cannot long be conſidered and eſteemed as a huſband. What reſpect can a wife have for a huſband, if ſhe does not find in him that knowledge and ſupport, ſhe has a right to expect from him? He knows not how to govern himſelf; how, then, can he wiſely and mildly direct thoſe who belong to him? If he acquits himſelf careleſsly of the duties belonging to the head of a family, he loſes by his own fault the happineſs attached to the conjugal union. He is without occupation, and by his negligence becomes a burthen to the beſt wife poſſible, whom he forces to obſerve thoſe faults which his induſtry and a prudent circumſpection ought to have concealed from her. Thus devoted to indolence, can he ſhare with her any ſatisfaction, to which he can claim having contributed by his exertions, and thus give her proofs of his tenderneſs and attention? Equally deſtitute of ſenſe and virtue, can he pretend to bring up children ſo as to make them an honour to his houſe, and uſeful members of ſociety? This no one can ſuppoſe; and it is hardly poſſible to conceive all his vexations, all his follies, all the confuſion which reigns in his family, unleſs many uncommon virtues and qualities in his wife are exerted to counteract ſo many evils? Can a woman, who has no capacity for thoſe duties which peculiarly belong to her ſex, who underſtands nothing but how to dreſs herſelf to the beſt advantage,

whoſe ideas of merit are confined to wealth and beauty, on which ſhe proudly values herſelf to her huſband; a woman without education, ſubjugated by her paſſions, and who has never ſeriouſly reflected on the real deſtination of man in this world, can ſuch a woman conſtitute the felicity of her huſband; can ſhe retain his affection, can ſhe eſtabliſh order in his family, and make it proſperous; can ſhe apply herſelf to making her children wiſe and virtuous? Whoever chuſes ſuch a woman, being aware of her character, whatever underſtanding he may otherwiſe poſſeſs, is a madman who loſes ſight entirely of the true end of marriage. He who chuſes ſuch a one ignorantly, has made his choice heedleſsly, and acted like a child in the moſt important concern of his life. If he has allowed himſelf to be ſeduced by his imagination, by an impoſing outward appearance, by the ſolicitation of friends, he has neither conſulted his heart nor his underſtanding; if he had no other object than fortune and ſituation, what he might receive immediately on theſe points from his wife, or derive from her future expectations, he has it not in his view to contract a marriage but a bargain, when he unites himſelf to ſuch a woman.

Let us now ſuppoſe two rational and virtuous perſons, who know and are attached to each other, and whoſe mutual inclination, regulated by prudence and authoriſed by the conſent of parents, incites

them to unite themſelves to one another by the ſacred tie of marriage, we muſt form to ourſelves an idea of this union free of many troubles and uneaſineſſes ſaid to be attached to the ſtate. Their love will not be changed into indifference by poſſeſſion, their intimate connection will not produce diſguſt; it will become a calm and firm friendſhip, and a mutual ſatisfaction, which every day will encreaſe and ſtrengthen. They think of each other continually, and their reciprocal affection facilitates to them their reſpective duties, the obſervance of which maintains and redoubles their attachment. They labour on each ſide for their domeſtic advantage, and though they fulfil different functions, each tends to the ſame end. Previous to their marriage they had from motives of duty habituated themſelves to induſtry and application, and ſince their union, the object of their duty being more decided, a greater variety of motives urge them to practice it, and their attachment renders it more agreeable. As they have the ſame views, they aſſiſt each other by their advice, their mutual concurrence, their prudence, their experience, and their example. They communicate their reciprocal information to each other, without being vain of it. Love is the ſoul of their thoughts and of their actions; it unites them in one, as to whatever concerns their happineſs, the education of their children, the ſucceſs of their cares and labours. The

husband governs as head of the family, but in concert with his wife. She loves him as her husband and honours him as her support. He loves her as his wife, and respects in her a virtuous friend and mother of a family. Before marriage, they felt virtue an obligation on their consciences to which they were faithful, and to which the ties of love bind them still more strongly. Could it indeed be possible that attached to each other, and furnished by their union with fresh subjects of exertion, they should not labour in concert to bring those virtues to perfection, which constitute the happiness of their souls, and the merit which makes them deserving of affection? Full of humane and pious sentiments, their hearts are mutually penetrated with them, and they double their own happiness, by making it turn to the advantage of society, and by considering their felicity as a blessing bestowed on them by Providence, on whose protection they rely for its continuance. They perceive in their situation the will of God which has appointed it; and thus find numberless circumstances of consolation, where others only meet with those of anxiety and alarm. Haller expresses on this subject, in his poems, how sensibly he felt the loss of his wife.

"Thou wast my adviser, my dear Eliza, and none but ourselves knew the felicity God bestowed on me. My joy was doubled by seeing thee so faithfully par-

take it; This was to me more than the advantages of fortune or of rank. And when ſome ſubject of chagrin diſtreſſed my heart, thou waſt eager to conſole me by thy tender ſolicitude. Thy gentle and melancholy ſoothings reſtored tranquillity to my mind; I condemned that uneaſineſs which grieved thee."

Mutual fidelity, is the guardian angel of conjugal love, which diſpels injurious ſuſpicion and mortal jealouſy. Married perſons are like others, apt to commit faults, but they repair them by their regret and reciprocal indulgence. What a firſt emotion may have in it of improper in the one, is repaired by the other with equal prudence and affection; and their ſincerity, always accompanied by a wiſe moderation, never gives any blow to their eſteem for each other. They know how to turn aſide whatever may feed pride of heart, and give riſe to contempt; their tenderneſs equally deſtroys one and the other of theſe failings. How ample a field is afforded them for the exerciſe of their virtues by the attention they give mutually to the care of their children, and what a ſource of ſatisfaction is this to their hearts! Satisfaction and pleaſure which ſprings up for them, in proportion as the children proſper, and which ſoftens every pain and trouble they can experience, in giving them a good education. It is impoſſible not to admire the diverſity of character

which marks the two ſexes, and the variety of advantages and agreeable harmony which reſult from this ſpecies of contract. Courage and intrepidity in men, gentleneſs and timidity in women. The talents of the firſt, for planning and executing arduous undertakings for the public good; the delicate ſenſe of the female ſex for what concerns order, propriety, good taſte, in whatever relates to the interior of domeſtic arrangements, are qualities which reciprocally require aid, and afford it. The huſband inclined to command, and the wife ſoftening by her gentleneſs what this inclination might have in it of harſh, are ſurely formed for one another. As the huſband is capable of protecting the wife, and procuring her the means of ſubſiſtence, ſhe is no leſs fitted to lighten his labours, and ſoften them by the comforts attached to her ſociety; and whilſt he is particularly charged with the care of providing for the maintenance of the family, ſhe underſtands how to apply and manage what he acquires, and to ſecond his induſtry by her œconomy. The gentle diſpoſition of the wife moderates the more ardent one of the huſband, and arreſts its violence. The vivacity and gaiety of the one, tempers admirably the gravity of the other, which might degenerate into chagrin; if after long exertion of his mental powers and bodily ſtrength, the huſband did not regain ſerenity of mind in his wife's ſociety. The ſenſibility

of the female ſex being more eaſily excited and evaporated than that of men, which being leſs eaſily moved is more profound, makes each more capable of encouraging and calming the other, as it alſo enables them to yield prudently when one of the two is under the immediate influence of any unruly paſſion. Theſe are ſo many proofs of the ſuitableneſs of one ſex to the uſefulneſs and ſatisfaction of the other; and when from obſtinacy or frivolous reaſons, we condemn ourſelves to celibacy, do not we deprive ourſelves of the moſt precious comforts of life? Beſides, that one who lives in a ſtate of celibacy expoſes his virtue, is it not a conſiderable loſs to be deprived of the lawful gratifications attached to the tendereſt of our natural inclinations, which has ſuch influence over our ſocial virtues, that without it, the heart of man concentrates his ſentiments in ſelf, and eaſily gives himſelf up to chagrin? All thoſe whoſe circumſtances permit and make it a duty incumbent on them to marry, and who are deterred from ſo doing by an ill underſtood love of eaſe, or the fear of making a bad choice, underſtand their own intereſt very imperfectly, by thus refuſing to liſten to the wiſe voice of nature. Let them recollect the eulogium made by the ſon of Sirach, "Bleſſed is the man that hath a virtuous wife, for the number of his days ſhall be double; a virtuous woman rejoices in her huſband, and he ſhall fulfil the

years of his life in peace; a good wife is a good portion which ſhall be given in the portion of them that fear the Lord. Let ſuch a man be rich or poor, if he have a good heart toward the Lord, he ſhall have a contented heart, and they two ſhall rejoice at all times with a chearful countenance. The grace of a wife delighteth her huſband, and her diſcretion will chear his heart. A ſhamefaced and faithful woman is a double grace, and her continent mind cannot be valued. As the ſun when it ariſes in the high heavens, ſo is the beauty of a good wife in the ordering of her houſe."* Friendſhip though highly valuable, cannot compenſate to us the privation of virtuous love. It can never produce that union of ſouls which is formed by marriage between man and wife, and which entirely unites their views, their riches, and their labours. In fact, who lives for the huſband? For whom does the wife exiſt? For whom are they both anxious, and for whom do they both labour? My friend's children can they equally be mine? His reputation cannot touch me ſo nearly as my own. The care of his fortune cannot ſo deeply intereſt me as my own concerns. My reputation is the glory of my wife, and her's, my honour. A thouſand circumſtances may ſeparate me from my friend, death alone can deprive me of my wife. When can I conſider the fortune of my

* Eccleſiaſticus, c. 26.

friend as my own, and whatever good will he may bear me, can he be unceaſingly occupied about me? This may and ought to be the caſe between married people. Haller, who had made the happy experiment, thus decides the compariſon, "How much more tender are the ſentiments of a wife, who from all thoſe of her ſpecies, has dedicated herſelf entirely to us! In her breaſt, our heart repoſes ſecurely, and diſburthens itſelf of all its moſt ſecret anxieties; and as ſhe has no wiſhes, no other cares but what occupy us, ſhe glories in our ſucceſſes, poſſeſſes every thing in poſſeſſing us, and wiſhes nothing further for herſelf. Her whole life, the ſpring of her youth, and the fruits of her maturity, ſhe conſecrates to us. Our faults excite no reproaches, they are the object of a tender forbearance, by which ſhe endeavours to recall us, if carried away by our ſenſes, we have had the misfortune to deviate from our duty. Never can the temptation of a ſuperior ſituation, nor the inconſtancy of fortune, deprive us of her heart, and break the bonds which unite us; each day by her care, ſeems to add new brightneſs and freſh comforts to our life; her very look penetrates to the bottom of our hearts, that ſhe may prevent our wiſhes. When her outward form correſponds with the beauty of her mind, when nature has beſtowed on her all the graces which can adorn a mortal, is there a

higher felicity to be defired on earth, by ſouls who are not yet ripe for the glory of heaven?"

The ſatisfaction which parents derive from their children, is aſſuredly the moſt lively of any we can experience in this world. This ſatisfaction repays them with uſury whatever pains they have been at to educate them well. A father who on his death bed bleſſes the child who has anſwered the care taken of it, loves it with a ſtill purer ſatisfaction than when he received it firſt from the arms of his wife. How highly was the tender name of father eſteemed amongſt the ancients! I do but ſtammer forth the imperfect expreſſion of a ſentiment which tranſports my heart, though I am a ſtranger to it except from what I have read or heard concerning it, and by the effects I have ſeen it produce on my friends; by which I have learnt to conceive ſome idea of the delightful pleaſure experienced by parents, from ſeeing themſelves live again in well diſpoſed children, and from beholding in their proſperity the accompliſhment of their parental riches, the reward of their labours, and finding their own happineſs and reputation in that of their children! What a glorious ſatisfaction is it to have given uſeful members of ſociety to earth and inhabitants to heaven, who will ſhare in the felicity of the bleſſed. This is a luxury which thoſe forego, who voluntarily deprive themſelves of the comforts attached to the marriage uni-

on. How many men who conſume their lives in a diſmal and ſolitary manner, without occupation, would have lived a comfortable and induſtrious life, in the married ſtate! How many would have been better able to provide what was neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence in the married ſtate than in celibacy, which their fear of not being able to do has made them prefer! The œconomy of a prudent wife is fully equivalent to the expence of her maintenance. It is an obſervation founded on long experience, that in proportion as a family encreaſes its number of children and becomes more expenſive, the bleſſing of God is beſtowed on them in proportion; who can doubt it? Two perſons who have already means of ſubſiſting decently, unite themſelves to one another for life, with views conformable to the ſanctity of marriage, may they not promiſe themſelves by means of their aſſiduous induſtry and an unſhaken virtue, that Providence will throughout their lives provide them with what is neceſſary? If they have children are they not alſo under the protection of God? Is it neceſſary to leave them a rich inheritance? Can they receive any thing better than a good education? Will not this ſuffice them? When have we ſeen poor children, whoſe parents are deſerving from their honeſty, entirely abandoned; or rather has not an inviſible hand frequently conducted them to conſiderable fortunes, however they might be ori-

ginally expoſed to poverty? We certainly ought not to hope to force Providence to favour a decidedly imprudent marriage; but on the other hand, we ought to confide in its bleſſing, and from this confidence, be encouraged to make a choice regulated by prudence and virtue. The mere dread of making one which may cauſe us to repent, is not a motive ſufficiently ſtrong to induce us to decide in favour of celibacy; the example of unhappy marriages ought only to make us more circumſpect, but not to deter us. If marriage is ordained by God (which it undoubtedly is,) we ought not to fear a ſtate conformable to his views, at the ſame time, that we practice concerning it, all the rules of human prudence. Suppoſe that even after having uſed every poſſible circumſpection, our choice ſhould not ſucceed to our wiſhes, we muſt conſider whatever diſtreſſes us in it, as part of that ſeries of events which God ſees fit ſhould happen, during the courſe of our lives, from views worthy of his wiſdom and goodneſs. By ſubmitting to it with reſignation, let us try to remove the evil, by prudence, and propriety of conduct, as much as depends on us. More than one rational woman has happily changed the character of her huſband, by a wife forbearance and an unwearied patience; many a ſenſible huſband has reformed by his affection, his prudence, and his example, the manners and inclinations of a wife, whoſe

education had been originally neglected.* In ſhort, if a friend is a precious gift which we look on as beſtowed by God, and to be aſked from him; may we not hope to obtain from his goodneſs a huſband or wife who poſſeſſes noble and tender ſentiments, a good and upright heart ſuch as, knowing nothing more likely to promote our happineſs on earth, we may be more ſolicitous to obtain than any other temporal advantage?

There is no more certain means of obtaining a happy marriage than purity of morals in our youth; we ſhould alſo ſtudy to acquire the qualities of the mind. A knowledge of arts and ſciences is no leſs uſeful to us, than calculated to make us agreeable; and added to which, we muſt take care of our health and give a degree of attention to the outward appearance of our perſons. We ought to cultivate propriety and agreeableneſs of manners, and to apply ourſelves to rectify the faults of our education and of our natural tempers. Careful as much as poſſible to make a good choice, we muſt firſt conſult our heart, and then our underſtanding, and not

* Lord Halifax, in his letters to his daughter, gives her much wiſe advice on the manner in which to endeavour at acquiring the affection of her huſband ſhould her marriage prove unfortunate; and many a young perſon of the female ſex would do well to impreſs this advice on her mind before marriage, rather than to form her ideas of this ſtate on the imagination of romantic love.

neglect the opinion of thoſe we moſt eſteem. Our eyes may lead us to incline to a particular perſon, but ought never to decide us. Virtue is what will ever determine a heart filled with proper ſentiments; virtue we alſo ſuppoſe to include a ſound underſtanding, in truth, this is frequently the conſequence of virtue. Every ſenſible and virtuous woman, will poſſeſs the neceſſary capacity for conducting the domeſtic concerns of the family, and when aſſured that her heart is attached to me, that ſhe takes a ſhare in all my feelings and wiſhes, what can lead two perſons thus mutually attached to ſuſpect the propriety of their choice of each other? Love will hide or correct every trifling fault. Whatever difficulties may ariſe from marriage, mutual love will maintain our mutual ſatisfaction, and prudence united to virtue will take care to baniſh whatever might cool affection or deſtroy it. Solomon thus draws the character of a virtuous woman, a good and prudent wife, "The heart of her huſhand doth ſafely truſt in her, ſo that he ſhall have no need of ſpoil; ſhe will do him good and not evil all the days of her life, ſtrength and honour are her clothing, and ſhe ſhall rejoice in time to come; ſhe openeth her mouth with wiſdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindneſs; ſhe looketh well to the ways of her houſehold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs; her children ariſe up, and call her bleſſed; her huſband

alſo, and he praiſeth her; many daughters have done virtuouſly, but thou excelleſt them all; favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, ſhe ſhall be praiſed."* Is not this the deſcription of a truly worthy wife? How meritorious would thoſe mother's be who ſhould educate their daughters to reſemble it! Bleſſed be thoſe whoſe cares are employed whether in the palaces of princes or in the humble cottages of the peaſants, in forming ſuch wives for you, my young friends. Believe me, the young man of good morals and induſtry, has the beſt right to aſpire to the bleſſing of a happy marriage.

Proverbs, xxxi. v. 11. 12. 25. 30.

TWENTY-SIXTH LESSON.

ON OUR DUTIES TOWARDS GOD, CONSIDERED AS THE SOURCE OF ALL OUR OTHER DUTIES.

I terminate theſe leſſons with a ſhort expoſition of our duties to God, ſuch as they are taught us by natural religion. They form ſo eſſential a part of morality, that moral leſſons in which they are not mentioned, would be like lifeleſs pictures, and a beautiful body without a ſoul.

All duties as well thoſe which relate to ourſelves as thoſe which have in view our neighbour; all duties, as has been already ſaid, in the leſſon which ſerves as an introduction to my diſcourſes on morality, derive their principal force from the idea of a Supreme Being and infinitely holy, whoſe laws are imprinted on our reaſon and our conſcience; which ought to lead us to reſpect them, and

to ſubmit ourſelves to their dictates, with entire acquieſcence. It is this only which can give worth to the performance of theſe duties, and which conſtitutes them real virtues. What, in fact, are all the ſocial duties we fulfil, independent of their connection with the will of God and ſubmiſſion to his laws? Nothing but artificial movements which the ſprings of intereſt, of ſelf love, and of pride put in action, as long as we find our advantage in them. If there is no God; no juſt and holy God; and if our ſouls do not exiſt after death, virtue is only a chimera. I ſay more, that if there is no God who watches over the ſecret thoughts and actions of men, virtue is but folly, and proſperous vice the only true wiſdom; and the beſt rule of conduct we can purſue on this ſuppoſition, is to gratify every deſire of our hearts, and to live without any ſenſe of humanity, as far as we can do it with impunity.

Of all characters, the moſt abominable is that of a man who admits no divinity, and will not acknowledge and adore a juſt and holy God. Is it poſſible to contemplate heaven and earth, the wonderful traces of wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, which theſe objects place before our eyes; the order, the beauty, the utility every where viſible, without perceiving a God who diſcovers himſelf throughout his works? Can any one be ſenſible of his own exiſtence, feel himſelf endowed with the faculty of thinking, in-

vincibly urged on to happineſs; can he preſerve any feelings of conſcience, and be in any degree attentive to the marvellous organiſation of his body, to the infinity of means eſtabliſhed to ſupply its wants, and not acknowledge a prime author of all that exiſts, whoſe wiſdom, power, and holineſs are infinite; but rather chuſe to ſubſtitute in his room, chance and blind neceſſity? Every thing in the univerſe, great ſource of life! announces and proves thy preſence, and yet the infidel cannot perceive thee. He dares to ſay, in his heart, there is no God. He dares, ſuch is his audacity, entertain this idea in that very heart, in which every thing revolts againſt ſo fooliſh and ſo deteſtable an opinion. His very tongue which he conſtrains to expreſs it, whilſt it ſerves him as an organ of ſpeech, atteſts the culpability of his voluntary blindneſs. Yes, to a perſon, whom the exiſtence of the world, his own exiſtence, his inward feeling, his ſenſe of moral good and evil, the hope and fear concerning a life after this impreſſed in his heart; the perſon whom all theſe conſiderations, do not convince of the exiſtence of God, muſt find every other proof of this truth ineffectual. The perſon who admits the exiſtence of God, of all his perfections, who attributes all our powers to him, and yet confines the exiſtence of the ſoul to ſome fleeting moments, to the ſhort reſidence we make on earth, muſt have a very poor idea of the

adorable being, who unites in himſelf all perfection. Is my ſoul immortal? Whatever pains an infidel may take to throw an obſcurity over this queſtion; and whatever ſcientific ſolution a philoſopher may attempt to give it, the ſentiment which God has impreſſed on the ſoul itſelf, of an invincible deſire for eternal life, is a clear and deciſive proof of its reality. The proofs brought forward by philoſophy, in favour of the immortality of the ſoul drawn from its nature, certainly deſerve attention. They may convince ſome minds diſpoſed to theſe kinds of inveſtigations, and have no effect on others who are little capable of reaſoning. Do not theſe include the majority of the world? Can we ſuppoſe that the queſtion of moſt importance to us and to all the human race, can only be determined by profound philoſophical ſpeculations? You enquire and you feel uncertain whether your ſoul is immortal? To be convinced that it is ſo, fly ſeriouſly from vice, and repreſent to yourſelf, in the Supreme Being, a degree of goodneſs, at leaſt equal to that which you attribute to your moſt reſpectable friend. To convince yourſelf that there is another life after this, be virtuous, and think of God as of an equitable father full of tenderneſs, and who poſſeſſes the power of puniſhing or making his children happy. In a word, be pious, and then enquire whether you can ceaſe to exiſt. Vice dreads eternity, becauſe it is

forced to dread God, with a ſlaviſh fear; and that not daring to pretend to be the object of his infinite goodneſs, he forms to himſelf very faint ideas of this divine attribute. Be pious and reflect on the unbounded power of your creator; and then conſider, that whether your ſoul is a ſimple being, or compoſed of parts, you muſt always be certain that the Almighty has the power to make it live eternally. Be pious, and it will appear inconceivable, that infinite goodneſs ſhould ever annihilate it.

An upright and ſincere heart poſſeſſes in the inward ſenſe of what it feels and deſires, invincible proofs of immortality; it is led to its concluſions by a kind of logical feeling, and the idea of being eternally happy, is too delightful to the mind to allow it to doubt concerning it voluntarily; much leſs to ſeek to diſbelieve it. Any one whoſe humility might lead him to queſtion, whether he deſerves to live eternally, may as well aſk himſelf how he has deſerved to live in this world. It is by an effect of the unmerited goodneſs of my Creator that I now exiſt, and the continuance of this exiſtence is equally a gratuitous gift from that infinitely good Being, who cannot fear to exhauſt the treaſures of felicity, which he reſerves for his creatures, by permitting them to enjoy it eternally. The difficulty we find in conceiving the exiſtence of our ſouls, after their ſeparation from our bodies, ought not to diſturb us

much. Can we clearly comprehehend how God has ſo cloſely united our ſouls to our bodies? Can any one dare to maintain that this is more difficult to the Almighty than it was to give it being originally, and to unite it to the body which it animates? We find in ourſelves and in God, ſufficient proofs to convince us that it is not his will to limit our exiſtence to this ſhort life, but that he purpoſes to prolong it infinitely; a refined underſtanding acquieſces in theſe proofs, and founds a faith on them which conſtitutes its glory: and gives praiſe to God. Could the immortality of the ſoul be an error, and its annihilation a truth, it would be the only and inconceiveable caſe, in which error would be more conformable to reaſon than truth; and in which it would be infinitely preferable for the tranquillity of mankind that they ſhould be deceived, than that they ſhould judge rightly. Is it only poſſible or probable, that the ſoul ſhould exiſt for ever in a ſtate of happineſs or miſery; and is the contrary, equally poſſible and probable? It is ſtill of infinite importance to us to regulate our lives on a ſuppoſition of the firſt propoſition being true, and the contrary abſolutely falſe. Shall I return after death to my original nothing? The idea is terrible, but at leaſt, I ſhall not feel that my hopes are diſappointed. Shall I continue to exiſt? In this caſe, I ſhall be infinitely happy in having lived with a view to eternity. It is not

leſs pernicious to us, to deny the immortality of the ſoul, than it is to doubt the exiſtence of God: and if in death we muſt ceaſe to hope in him, it is in ſome ſort a reaſon for us not to reſpect him greatly in life. Am I only deſtined for this world, does my reward or puniſhment extend only to this life; I imagine, and be it ſaid without blaſphemy, that vice accompanied by prudence and moderation, may procure us more ſatisfaction than the moſt rigid virtue?*

The ſentiments of our hearts are regulated by the ideas of our underſtanding; conſequently the more juſt and lively our ideas are, of the perfections and greatneſs of God, the more pure and animated will be our adoration. To behold in him the moſt holy, the wiſeſt, the moſt powerful, and the moſt perfect-

* The cleareſt and the moſt perfect proof of the immortality of the ſoul is only to be found in revealed religion. God has explained it in his word; he alone cannot be miſtaken, and he alone is informed concerning it. This is a truth level to the meaneſt capacity. What weight can doubts and objections have againſt the divine authority of his word, to the truth of which I ſubſcribe? That faith which religion requires, is our moſt ſacred duty, becauſe it is the homage which we offer of our reaſon to God: on the other hand, infidelity is the greateſt of ſins, as it is contrary to the ſubmiſſion we owe to God, the ſource of many vices, and produced by the rebellion and perverſity of our hearts.

ly benevolent Being, to acknowledge him for the creator of the univerſe, the father and preſerver of ſpirits and of all that exiſts, to adore him as the ſupreme arbiter of all events, to repreſent him to ourſelves as the attentive witneſs of our actions, and as penetrating the moſt ſecret emotions of our hearts; to perſuade ourſelves that he is the ſource of all good, the eternal protector of virtue and the avenger of crimes, yet not to feel towards him any ſentiments of ſubmiſſion, of gratitude, of reſpect, of love, of confidence; to experience no deſire of being the object of his appprobation, or any dread of diſpleaſing him, can there exiſt a greater contradiction? He who pretends to acknowledge his creator, without proper feelings towards him, is unworthy to be claſſed amongſt men.

The knowledge of God and of his will is the moſt certain means of exciting in our hearts, pious and virtuous ſentiments. It is from the moſt ſublime ideas we can form to ourſelves of his perfections, from a conſtant care to renew their impreſſions daily, and to have them always preſent to our minds, that we muſt derive our ſentiments towards God. Theſe ideas of the Supreme Being are the ſacred ſource, and the ſoul of the ſocial virtues. To acknowledge God is neceſſarily our firſt duty, the conſtant performance of which ſhould conſtitute our greateſt felicity. We cannot form to ourſelves

too exalted an idea of God; we can never repreſent him to ourſelves ſo worthy as he really is of our love. We concentrate in the image we form to ourſelves of the Almighty, whatever is moſt perfect, whatever reaſon preſents to us as lovely, all that the creation and preſervation of the univerſe offers to our conſideration of great and excellent. Heaven and earth announce to us his goodneſs and ſovereign majeſty. Each ſtar in the ſimament, each production of the earth, each drop of water in the ocean, each ſtroke of our pulſe, each feeling of our heart, each thought of our underſtanding, each ſecret reproach of our conſcience, each emotion of joy we feel attendant on a good action, bear witneſs to the exiſtence of God. It is his mercy, his greatneſs; which each wonderful teſtimony of his wiſe government, each proof of his wonderful love, each evidence of his juſt adminiſtration, calls upon us to acknowledge. We think unworthily of him when we do not unite together in the idea we form to ourſelves of him, every poſſible quality that we can conceive, of goodneſs, of greatneſs, and of every imaginable perfection; all in the utmoſt degree of equal and infinite excellence. To repreſent to ourſelves his goodneſs as outweighing his juſtice, or his juſtice his goodneſs: To believe him more powerful than wiſe; or admitting his eternity, not to attribute to him unchangeableneſs of will, is it not to lower

him and to think him more like to man than to himſelf? This unfortunate diſpoſition of attributing the qualities of man to God, of repreſenting him to ourſelves under the imperfect idea of a powerful, wiſe, and beneficent monarch, ſuch indeed as we can figure to ourſelves moſt perfect on earth, is an error too common with mankind, even perhaps with thoſe who are more virtuous than well inſtructed.

An attentive and conſiderate reflection on ourſelves, and on the numberleſs works of divine wiſdom, muſt naturally produce in us reſpect and admiration. "Who can I reſpect," ſays the rational man to himſelf, "who can I reſpect and adore equally with the ſovereign maſter of the univerſe?" Living being, whoſe exiſtence is but of yeſterday; and who in an inſtant exiſts no more; inhabitant of a world not of my making, and in which I was placed unknown to myſelf; ſpectator, of innumerable wonders, which on all ſides offer themſelves to my view; animated ſoul; duſt endowed with the faculty of thinking and willing: who has made me what I am? From whence have I the feelings of love and hatred of which I am ſenſible; Whence have I theſe hopes, theſe fears, which affect me alternately? Who has made me ſuſceptible of a thouſand and a thouſand pleaſing ſenſations and ſentiments? To whom do I owe my preſervation, to

whom do the infinite variety of objects which affect my mind and my ſenſes owe theirs? To whom? To the Almighty! He is my God, my maſter, the arbiter of my fate, my benefactor, my friend, my father; who loads me each day with favours, and who, utterly incapable as I am of contributing to his felicity, treats me as a beloved child, as if I was the ſole object of his paternal care. And ſhall I not honour him! Shall I not fear ſo holy, ſo good a God, ſhall I not ſtudy to know his will, and to make it the rule of my actions? His will muſt ever be that which is beſt for his creatures! He is the great ſource of happineſs, benevolence, and wiſdom; ſhall I not throw myſelf into his boſom, ſhall I not be abſorbed in admiration of him, ſhall not I love him above all things, he whoſe gifts relate ſolely to my benefit, and who is infinitely ſuperior to every view of deriving advantage from my ſervices? He knows me and all that concerns me, from all eternity; he penetrates to the bottom of my ſoul; he ſees the deſire I have to pleaſe him; in what manner I apply myſelf to this purpoſe; and what ſincere though feeble efforts I make to practice virtue. He knows what is good for me, and what would be prejudicial to me, he even makes evils turn to my good. He governs as God, as the ſupremely wiſe, holy, and good Being. To whom can I reſign my fate with more entire confidence? From whom can I more

ſecurely expect peace and ſalvation than from him? What he ordains concerning me, though painful in appearance, muſt finally turn to my advantage. What he aſſigns me, how contrary ſo ever it may be to my deſires, will contribute to my felicity, and is an effect of his love. Is it affliction, ſome loſs, were it even the loſs of the objects deareſt to my heart or of my own life, let me truſt in him and humbly reſign myſelf to all his diſpenſations, to all the degrees of his wiſdom. Is he not my ſovereign maſter, the infinitely perfect God? I am ſafe in his hands, and his goodneſs will be the eternal object of my truſt. Whilſt I fear him, I may baniſh every other fear; even in the grave, he prepares my return to life, and wherever my ſoul may exiſt after death, I know that it will ever be in the preſence of the omnipreſent God.

Piety of heart, ſuppoſes then a practical faith in the exiſtence of God, founded on the ſureſt principles of reaſon; as that confidence ſuppoſes juſt ideas of God, of his attributes, of his will, to which he commands us to conform, in conſequence of the relation in which he ſtands to us, and of which we ought at all times to be fully ſenſible. If theſe ideas are changed or diſturbed, virtue ſoon degenerates in our hearts, ſuperſtition ſoon becomes mixed with our piety, and religion ſerves as a cloak to our paſſions. If we efface from the heart of man all ſenſe

of love, gratitude, and truſt in God, his virtue will be but a ſhadow deſtitute of reality; in loſing theſe, the ſoul is deprived of all that conſtitutes its true and greateſt dignity; our unbounded deſire of happineſs is deprived of its principal object; all is wanting to our felicity, in as much, as the chief good belonging to the ſoul, the Supreme Being no longer occupies it. I go further, and I ſay, that ſuppoſing the love of God extinguiſhed in the ſoul, the noble ſentiment of love to mankind will vaniſh alſo; that the moſt powerful inducement to the exerciſe of this virtue becomes then only ſelf love and vanity; and that all our merit on this ſcore conſiſts no longer in any thing, but in being able to appear different from what we really are, and in turning the diſpoſitions of whoever may be uſeful to us to our own profit.

That faith then which leads us to admit an infinitely perfect God, is the primary duty of an intelligent creature; as it would be highly unreaſonable, having before our eyes the ſtrongeſt proof of his exiſtence in the view of nature, and the numberleſs wonders it contains, to refuſe to acknowledge the great Creator. This faith is alſo our primary duty, becauſe nothing tranquillizes our hearts and ſecures our felicity ſo much, as the certainty, that we are under the protection and direction of a divine Providence. Moreover, it is on this knowledge that reſts whatever of truth exiſts in our underſtandings,

and of holineſs in our hearts. As long as we have ſound and lively ideas of God, that we reflect on his knowledge and infinite power, that we conſider him as goodneſs, wiſdom, and holineſs itſelf; the ſource of our life and of our happineſs; and in a word, that we occupy ourſelves with the obligations each of theſe perfections impoſe on us; ſo long we feel in our hearts, the deſire of pleaſing God animating us to the ſtudy and practice of his will; referring all our faculties of mind and body, and all our exterior advantages to the end for which he beſtowed them on us.

Thus, this idea of the divinity is the foundation of all the obedience we owe him; and the love of God awakened in our hearts by the conſideration of his goodneſs and of his power to make us happy, is, in us, the ſoul and foundation of a free, ſincere, and conſtant ſubmiſſion to his will. If we have a juſt and lively idea of God, we ſhall honour and love him ſupremely. But is it to be conceived, that we can love him, and conſequently propoſe to ourſelves to perform his will, as what is moſt advantageous for us to do; is it poſſible that we can conſider mankind as his family, and comprehend that he has the ſame intention towards them as towards us, that of making them happy; and yet not love them, not take part in their felicity, not aſſiſt them in their diſtreſſes, though we know it is his will they

ſhould be happy? True humanity, therefore, that humanity which is a virtue becomes ſuch, and naturally ariſes from love and reſpect towards God. To ſay that we are animated by theſe ſentiments, to pretend that they reign in our hearts, though we do not ſubmit thoſe of ſelf love to the will of God, as far as it is known to us; to take no care to do or to omit what reaſon and conſcience directed by him, point out to us as good or evil; is it not a revolting contradiction? Let us love God truly; an exceſſive ſelf love will then ceaſe to tyrannize over us, and we ſhall ſeek our happineſs entirely in a manner conformable to the plan of the Almighty, which will be our only rule of action. The felicity of others will be a perpetual ſource of joy to our hearts, and we ſhall find our own in the laudable diſpoſitions of which God has made us capable, and which we know to be anſwerable to the end to which he deſtines us. Were we then what we ought to be in regard to the relations in which we ſtand to God, ſentiments of the more profound ſubmiſſion and moſt filial obedience would at all times animate us. In fact, theſe are the neceſſary conſequences of a juſt idea of God. A religious fear would engage our minds, and forbid us every vicious action and intention, merely from a ſenſe of the holineſs of the Supreme Being. As long as the idea of his goodneſs is preſent to us, there ariſes in our minds an

earneſt wiſh, as we can in no way contribute to his felicity, to glorify him, at leaſt, by our admiration, our delight in the contemplation of all his mercies; a true ſenſe of which, joined to that of our own unworthineſs, would produce gratitude and humility. Whenever our minds dwell on his power, his omniſcience, in conjunction with his goodneſs, an entire confidence and reſignation muſt ariſe in our minds from theſe conſiderations, in regard to whatever he ordains concerning us: a courageous and conſoling reſolution in whatever danger might threaten our lives or our virtue; a patience and compoſure of mind in adverſities and ſufferings, which would enable us to make every poſſible effort to conquer the melancholy which naturally ſprings from them, and to acquieſce in the will of that Almighty Being who is our Father and our God. As long as his love towards us occupies our minds, ſentiments of humanity ought to fill our hearts, and make us feel happy in the felicity of our fellow creatures; full of compaſſion for their ſufferings, and deſirous of ſeeing them all, without exception, happy according to the views of the common father of all mankind. In whatever caſe the love we owe them can reſtrain what we feel for ourſelves, the conſideration of the perfections of God, eſpecially of his great mercy which pardons ſo much to men, ought to make us triumph over our ſelf love. On

whatever occaſion the love of God is to be preferred to our natural inclinations, we have only to reflect on his greatneſs and how infinitely worthy he is of our love, to ſubmit entirely to him all partial regard to ourſelves.

But who can attribute to themſelves ſo perfect a virtue, and boaſt of regulating their inclinations on ſuch a ſyſtem? Who does not, on the contrary, diſcover in his heart and actions, thouſands of deviations more or leſs diſcernable from the laws of conſcience and from the rules by which we ought to govern our inclinations, and which reſult from the knowledge we have of God? What means have we remaining to make ourſelves acceptable in his ſight; we whoſe imperfections, whoſe faults, and whoſe errors are all in oppoſition to his holineſs? Can it be that after having abandoned ourſelves to one, nay, to many vices, after having perſevered in them, we are able to obliterate a ſtain which pollutes us ſo much in his ſight? This queſtion it is equally important and difficult to reſolve. With whatever luſtre virtue may ſhine in the ſyſtem traced of it by reaſon, it is far from preſerving the ſame ſplendour in our hearts and conduct. How great is the difference between having juſt ideas of virtue, and being really virtuous; between admiring it in the pictures we may form of it to ourſelves, and the practice of it; between love for it when our paſſions are

calm, or ſacrificing to it our moſt agreeable and ſometimes our tendereſt feelings! What a diſtance between the practice of ſome detached acts of virtue, from well formed diſpoſitions, and a fixed and deliberate intenton to remain conſtantly and on every occaſion faithful to our duty! It muſt, at leaſt, be a very powerful ſentiment preſiding over our hearts, which can lead us to be ſo ſtrongly attached to our duty as to prefer it to every thing elſe, without ſwerving from it on any occaſion.

Reaſon left to itſelf, has no means of avoiding deſpair on accouut of all the tranſgreſſions we have committed, but by taking refuge in the mercy of God by repentance and amendment of life. Unleſs God has made known to us ſome other reſource by a more particular revelation, it is probable that he preſcribes, and will accept ſuch a repentance as reaſon dictates; ſince aſſuredly there is no one, who at all times and in all reſpects, in the exerciſe of his underſtanding and the affections of his heart, obeys the will of God as he ought and as he might, even when conſtantly on his guard.

From whence however can we derive this power and inclination, to maintain the idea of God, and of our duties ever preſent to our minds; to retrace them to ourſelves aſſiduouſly, and to make it act on our hearts? Are we not often very little diſpoſed to this? Do we not find ourſelves unable to impreſs

it on our minds, and even when our underſtandings are ſeriouſly engaged on it, do not our hearts remain cold and inſenſible? Our experience of this is but too indiſputable; it is melancholy and humiliating; but it ought to detach us from ſelf confidence, and lead us to hope that the Almighty, our Creator and Father, will not refuſe us his help. Reaſon tells us that he will not; and to encourage us with humble confidence to implore his aſſiſtance, reminds us of his goodneſs, which makes him take an intereſt in our happineſs, and tells us that he is the good and merciful God. When penetrated with the deſire of his aſſiſtance, we lay our wiſhes before him, whether merely in thought or expreſſed in words, it is an act of adoration, an homage which we pay to the author of every perfect gift. On this occaſion we may ſay, that faith in God preſcribes to us the prayer of the heart and even that which proceeds from our mouths; in as much as the expreſſion of our ideas in words, fixes them more ſtrongly in our minds and renders alſo more lively, the impreſſion they make on us. It is not, however, by our prayers that God is excited to help us, but becauſe they are the effect of that love and confidence which inſpires them. In ſhort, virtue being the object of an affection as immutable in God as his averſion to vice, this conviction muſt make every one in whom theſe exiſt, ſatisfied as to the certainty of

the rewards and punishments they have to expect from God even in this life, and still more infallibly in that life to come; which souls, feeling themselves made for immortality naturally aspire to. O! how powerful a motive to virtue for creatures, on whom the author of their being has impressed an insurmountable horror of suffering! What can be a stronger encouragement to obedience than the power of obtaining eternal felicity by striving to obtain the favour of God: add to this the fear of being for ever deprived of his favour, and being condemned to endless misery: are not these sufficient to make us despise whatever is most seducing in vice, and to make us consider virtue as supremely amiable?

Such is the substance of the practical theology taught us by reason. It conducts to the theology of revealed religion. This ought chiefly to give it value in our estimation: and it is also one of the fundamental truths of christianity that he who cometh to God, or in other words, who wishes to know and to practice the salutary doctrine of the gospel, must believe that God is, and "that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* "And that in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him;"† that is to say, all whom God has not enlightened by revelation, but who according to the light of reason

* Heb. xi. v. 6. † Act x. v. 35.

and the feelings of conſcience, honour him and practice virtue, are objects of his approbation. This is ſtill further confirmed by the expreſſion, "that as many as have ſinned in the law, ſhall be judged by the law,"* not by revelation, but merely by the principles of reaſon and conſcience. Natural religion muſt therefore open to us the path which leads to that of the goſpel. But what is the excellence and ſuperiority of chriſtianity? It is, as expreſſed by the author of *Indifference for religion inexcuſable*, † "that the ſcripture, particularly the goſpel, inſtructs us completely concerning the different relations we bear to God, our Creator, Preſerver, Redeemer, and certain Protector, in the career we have to run for the attainment of perfection and felicity; it is, that the goſpel contains a clear and preciſe account of our duties, and that by it we may at all times inform ourſelves concerning the ſovereign will of our maſter. It is, that by repentance and faith, the goſpel doctrine changes and ſanctifies our hearts, and fills them with the will and the ſtrength to do well; it is, that it furniſhes us with the moſt powerful motives of gratitude, and a ſenſe of our own intereſt to induce us to regulate our lives according to the law of na-

* Rom. ii. v. 13.

† Indifference for religion, inexcuſable; or a ſerious review of the importance and harmony of religion, both natural and revealed by Sam. Squire.

ture and the evangelical precepts; it is laſtly, that we find in the goſpel, the conſolatory aſſurance, that the God of mercy will deign to accept the ſincere, the imperfect efforts we make to honour him and to conciliate his favour, on account of the death, redemption, and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt his ſon; for whoſe ſake he will make us eternally happy. The beſt chriſtian ought therefore to be the happieſt of men, viewing him entirely as to his lot here and hereafter." Such are the prerogatives which give the goſpel ſo decided a ſuperiority over natural religion.

CONCLUSION.

I thus terminate my courſe of morality, feeling no leſs indebted to thoſe who have honoured me with their attention, than earneſtly deſirous, that throughout the whole courſe of their lives, theſe leſſons may be uſeful to them. May I myſelf have compoſed them conſtantly in this view, ever under a lively and full conviction of the importance of my object, ever ſucceſsfully to the promotion of religion and morals!

Young men, to whom theſe leſſons have been more particularly addreſſed, if I entreat one favour of you in return, which it is in your power to grant me, a favour intereſting to your own felicity, a favour which I ſhall conſider as the moſt precious gift you can beſtow on me, and which will form the conſolation of my future days, could you refuſe to grant it me? Let me conjure you then to recollect

frequently, nay, daily, as an abridgement of theſe leſſons, that the only way to enjoy tranquillity, content, and felicity, and to die in poſſeſſion of theſe bleſſings, is conſtantly to ſtudy wiſdom, and to practice virtue and piety; the only means of obtaining the comfort of a good conſcience. Remember that their exiſts no real happineſs for man, but that of feeding his mind each day with the ſalutary precepts of natural and revealed religion, conforming his conduct exactly to its principles; that the ſooner he enters the path of virtue, the more eaſy and agreeable he will find it: and that every duty preſcribed to us by God has our happineſs for its object. Recollect, therefore, continually, that the young man and the man of riper years, can alone cleanſe his way by taking heed to it, according to the word of God.* Let the whole tenour of your life, be a practical, rational, and truly chriſtian courſe of morality. Apply yourſelves to it with all poſſible care and zeal.

However earneſtly we may and do endeavour to perform this duty, it is nevertheleſs impoſſible for us by our natural ſtrength to become wiſe and virtuous. I have always laboured to bring you back to this principle with which religion and experience furniſhes us: never loſe ſight of it. Man is by nature in a ſtate of infirmity and depravity, which does not allow him to attain by his own exertions the re-

covery and happineſs of his ſoul. As men and as chriſtians we muſt ſeek from God, and according to the means he has pointed out to us, the power of becoming virtuous in heart and mind. It is an important duty which reſults from the faith and obedience we owe to our creator and ſovereign maſter, and is alſo the firſt ſtep towards felicity. In conducting us to it, the feeble glimmerings of reaſon lead us to the brightneſs of revelation. By the aſſiſtance of reaſon we may certainly practice many apparent virtues, and abſtain from many vices, but it is not in the power of reaſon to regenerate our hearts. Let us then be careful to baniſh every falſe and ſuperſtitious idea of virtue. This virtue is not confined to our underſtanding; it does not conſiſt in ſome detached good actions; it does not conſiſt in what proceeds from the lips, or in a grave demeanour. It is not that outward decency and propriety of conduct, with which the world is ſatisfied; it is not a hypocritical bigotry, nor the gloomy devotion of a recluſe; neither is it a mere happy natural diſpoſition. It is the fruit of wiſdom, and a conſtant endeavour to reduce its dictates to practice; it is the choiceſt bleſſing God beſtows on us, not ſuddenly but by degrees; not without our conſent, but by a rational uſe of the means he has appointed for its attainment.

"Thus O young man, incline thine ear to wiſdom and apply your heart to underſtanding. If thou

ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures, then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wiſdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and underſtanding."* This true and lively knowledge of wiſdom, which enlightens the underſtanding, purifies the heart, makes it capable of virtue, and produces in us a prevailing diſpoſition to do well, an active and conſtant reſolution to ſubmit ourſelves to our duty on every occaſion, as to the will of God good, agreeable, and perfect; this is the ſublime wiſdom, conveyed by God to our ſouls through the medium and efficacy of the divine truths communicated to us by revelation, and this is real virtue.

Surrounded with ſo many temptations, beſet with ſo many paſſions, having to guard againſt the ſeducing attractions of vice, and the influence of bad examples, and the dangerous maxims of the world; if it is difficult to preſerve ourſelves inviolably attached to the practice of our duties; if inſurmountable obſtacles, freſh irregularities and imperfections of heart and underſtanding requiring to be corrected, preſent themſelves continually; nevertheleſs all imperfect as we are, and as are even thoſe far our ſuperiors in virtue, let us not be diſcouraged. Let us continually reflect on the powerful aſſiſtance which

* Prov. ii. v. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

is promiſed to us; on the many great motives, and on the magnificent and infinite rewards promiſed to virtue; on the dreadful chaſtiſements reſerved for vice; let us reflect on death, judgment, and eternity. Piety and true virtue, have the promiſes of this life and that which is to come. What does our heart ſeek and deſire but peace and contentment? But this peace, this contentment is only to be procured by piety and virtue. What then ſhould we ſeek with more ardour? What good ought we to prefer to virtue, and to a good conſcience? Heavenly wiſdom and virtue are not inimical to our enjoyments. If its purpoſe is to humble us, to regenerate our hearts, to ſet bounds to our deſires; if it lead us to God, by the painful path of repentance unto faith, even in this it ſhews itſelf ſo much the more worthy to ſerve us as a guide, as it gives elevation to our ſouls, and to our hearts all poſſible ſatisfaction. It makes us friends to ourſelves, friends to mankind, friends of the all powerful, all wiſe, and all good God. Can there be any thing left for us to wiſh? Is there any thing left for us to deſire beſides contentment here, and the full enjoyment of eternal felicity hereafter?

I will allow that it is not eaſy to perform the duties required of us by virtue, but there is no other direct and certain way to happineſs; this is ſufficient for any one who ſeeks to attain felicity.

God purpoſes to make us happy, and in this view

has given us laws. These laws tranquilise our hearts and are the delight of our lives. God dictates them in conjunction with reason and conscience, which by his direction point out what beings formed by him after his likeness ought to permit or forbid themselves to practice. The fear of God is wisdom, and our liberty consists in being governed by it. Instinct subjugates brutes, whilst man is under the guidance of reason. What is the essence, the property of his soul, his earthly destination? Virtue. What is his reward, his glory? A resemblance to God, which eternity will continually improve.

May God to whom be honour and glory, throughout all ages, grant us all this felicity!

FINIS.

KELSO:
Printed by A. Ballantyne.

INSTRUCTIONS

FROM

A FATHER TO HIS SON.

My Dear Son,

I shall, in this letter, repeat to you thoſe inſtructions in writing, which I have given you from your earlieſt years, or when I was already preparing you for your courſe of academical ſtudies. Let it be a conſtant teſtimony of my affection for you, and a continual encouragement to you to fulfil the new career which will bring you nearer and nearer to the end you ought to have ever in view. You enter the world as a ſtranger, and will lead in it a life quite new to you. The attention with which I have thus far conducted you, ſeconded by the cares of your worthy preceptors, has had for its object to enable you henceforward to need no other guide than yourſelf, and to make your firſt ſtep out of your paternal man-

ſion as beneficial to you as poſſible. I know the goodneſs of your heart, your attachment to me, your decided taſte for the ſciences, the deſire you feel to deſerve the eſteem of the well-informed and virtuouſly diſpoſed. But I alſo know the faults of your age and temperament. The errors into which want of experience may lead you, the ſeductions to which you will be expoſed, in a world where vice puts on its brighteſt allurements, and whoſe attractions are ſo powerful that the moſt virtuous heart finds great difficulty in reſiſting them, unleſs daily armed with courage and circumſpection. Liſten, therefore, my ſon, to the voice of a father, who propoſes to himſelf nothing leſs than to point out to you the path you muſt follow in this life to lead you to a happy eternity. The God who has entruſted you to my care, will one day call me to account for my inſtructions to you, and you will be alſo required to anſwer as to what uſe you have made of theſe inſtructions.

You are of that age which is, properly ſpeaking, moſt likely to decide on the future good or evil of your life. The years you are to ſpend at the univerſity are the more dangerous, as the fervour of the paſſions being, during that period, in full force, will not always leave your judgment ſufficiently cool to allow you to follow exactly the dictates of

wiſdom and virtue, and that the liberty you acquire at this time, and which has proved fatal to ſo many young ſtudents, leaves you in many points entirely maſter of your own actions.

You devote yourſelf to the ſtudy of the ſciences, which have for their object the forming your mind and heart, and which may enable you to promote the good of ſociety, as well as your own. To act on this double view is a duty impoſed on you by God, and this divine vocation, which your natural diſpoſition inclines you to follow, ſhould ennoble and animate your ſtudies. Apply yourſelf to them, therefore, from motives ſuperior to the deſire of ſurpaſſing others in learning, of getting a worldly reputation, of obtaining an eminent ſtation, and of finding your application rewarded by the acquiſition of a brilliant fortune. You cannot ſtudy from theſe views, without injuring the virtues of your heart by pride and vanity, even at the very time you enrich your memory and underſtanding with knowledge very uſeful in fact, but from which you would derive but ſmall advantage. Study then with a view to the glory of God, that is to ſay, conſecrate your talents to the acquiſition and conſtant practice of wiſdom and virtue, to gaining over an increaſing number of partiſans to its purſuit, and this from motives of obedience to God, whoſe gra-

ëious intentions you will thus glorify at the time that you will be engaged in ſtudies worthy of a Chriſtian. Religion, as I have repeatedly told you, my dear ſon, does not merely conſiſt in what is properly called worſhip. It is having a very poor idea of it, to confine it wholly to certain acts of devotion, and to view it merely as a tribute we occaſionally pay to God. No, it is a divine ſcience, which has been communicated to us with the intention of ennobling the ſentiments of our hearts, of eſtabliſhing them in calm compoſure, and conſequently muſt influence the whole courſe of our lives. We may and ought to apply ourſelves to the ſciences from the ſame principle which leads us to the exerciſe of prayer, or the practice of charity and benevolence, from that great principle of performing our duty in obedience to God. He it is who impoſes on us the obligation of carefully uſing every means of improving our different faculties for our own advantage and that of mankind in general. Let us ſuppoſe in two perſons an equal capacity, an equal application, and ſuppoſe them in circumſtances equally favourable to the proſecution of study; it is certain that he who devotes himſelf to it from ſo noble a motive, will go much further in the career of ſcience than he who is only ſupported in it by vanity or views of inter-

eſt. An application which we renew every morning from an idea of duty, of a duty to which our happiness is attached; which we ſuſtain throughout the day by wiſe reflections and the precepts of more experienced perſons; an application thus regulated, and zealouſly continued during ſeveral years, cannot but be crowned with the happieſt ſucceſs, and produce much more abundant and precious fruits than all the labour of the moſt ardent young man, who has in view nothing but vainglory, or the proſpect of gain.

He who not only ſtudies from taſte, but alſo from a principle of piety, will be more diſpoſed to economiſe his time, more capable of reſiſting whatever obſtacles might ariſe to his progreſs, more conſtant in purſuing the path he has traced out to himſelf, more deſirous of directing his views to the moſt intereſting objects, and more careful to avail himſelf of the advice and information of thoſe moſt able to inſtruct and direct him. As it is not with a view to ſhine by his learning, to make a parade of it, or to ſeize the firſt lucrative employment he can attain, that he devotes himſelf to ſcience, he will not be ſatisfied with ſuperficial and ill-digeſted information, he will defer making uſe of his acquirements till they have attained to maturity, and whatever talents he poſſeſſes will be ſolely devoted

to the acquiſition of real ſolid worth, and not to what has it only in appearance. A young man of parts, and whoſe ſtudies are well directed, will not long remain unknown to perſons of merit, nor be in want of friends who think nobly. Theſe friends will be to him freſh ſources of advice, encouragement, of zeal in applying to his ſtudies, and of procuring himſelf valuable books not in his poſſeſſion, and perhaps till then unknown to him. How great an advantage does a ſtudious young man derive from the obliging and communicative diſpoſition of thoſe who are his ſuperiors in learning and virtue?

Whoever ſtudies not only from taſte, but alſo from a motive of zeal to acquit himſelf of his duty, will find more ſatisfaction in ſtudy than others. How delightful a compoſure of mind he enjoys! he is conſcious that he labours to make that uſe of his faculties, his time, and his fortune, which the enlightened perſons he conſults point out to him as moſt proper: this conſideration conſoles him even when he does not always attain the end he propoſes to himſelf, or that he feels himſelf ſubject to thoſe failings which the weakneſs of human nature expoſes us to commit daily; failings which we ought to know that we may correct them, whatever may be our ſituation in life, or whatever ſtrug-

gle ſuch a taſk may occaſion us. Jealouſy of the ſuperior advancement of others in the world, or of their poſſeſſing a capacity which allows their minds to take in a greater variety of objects, this jealouſy will rarely ſlide into the heart of ſuch a young man as we are deſcribing, or will not long diſturb it; how inferior ſoever his talents may be, compared with thoſe of others, he uſes them as a ſacred depoſit committed to him by a God, who always diſpoſes his gifts with wiſdom, and who, if he has given us but one talent to improve, will only require of us in proportion to what we have received. He who faithfully employs whatever talent God has beſtowed on him, is what he ought to be according to the views of the Almighty; and his heart will not eaſily allow itſelf to be infected by the poiſon of envy and jealouſy, on account of the prerogatives granted to others. As he will make a juſt eſtimate of his own powers, and attend to the judgment formed of him by thoſe who have an opportunity of appreciating his capacity, he will never uſeleſsly aſpire to what is beyond his ability, but he will ſolely apply himſelf to thoſe objects in which his natural diſpoſition will enable him to be moſt ſucceſsful and moſt uſeful. Every man who propoſes to himſelf ſuch a noble end in his ſtudies, who warms his heart each day by ſuch conſidera-

tions, with the desire of performing his duty, and who, without neglecting a prudent attention to human means, implores with confidence the Author of all wisdom, entreating his blessing on his undertakings, may better promise himself than any one who acts differently, that he shall obtain this blessing. That wise and good Providence who sees at all times what is in the heart and dispositions of his creatures, will not fail to grant his aid to those who ask it, and whom, by his foreknowledge of all events from eternity to the present hour, he foresees will make a good use of it.

Let then this thought, my dear son, be ever present to your mind, and constantly influence every action and circumstance of your life; let it be indissolubly connected with the whole course of your studies, if you wish them to succeed happily, to procure true peace of mind, and to become not merely learned, but wise and prudent. Be always the sincere friend of virtue, it will make you still more the worthy friend of letters and of men. You may be learned without being pious, but know that he who has the most knowledge unaccompanied by virtue, is of all beings the most despicable and the most unfortunate.

Rise early, that you may devote the hour, in which you are least likely to be interrupted, to the

exercises of devotion, and to the perusal of the sacred writings. Consider each day as lost which, either through carelessness, or from some other bad motive, you have not begun by acts of grateful adoration, and humble prayer to the Almighty, imploring his assistance with sentiments of filial submission and gratitude: Consider each day as lost in which you have not employed your mind in pious reflections on the value of life, of religion, of a good conscience, and which you have not devoted to God in consequence of the alliance he has deigned to form with you through Jesus Christ. After having acquitted yourself of this first duty, turn your thoughts, my dear son, to your various occupations, consider on the method in which you may best pursue them, make a proper and regular distribution of your time: and perform with zeal and resolution whatever your duties require you to do.

If four hours are sufficient for your academical studies, four more for repeating in private what you have heard from your different professors, and four more to the cultivation of the fine arts, and to bodily exercises, you will have five hours remaining, which you may devote to your meals, to recreation, to the cultivation of friendship, and seven which ought to be devoted to sleep. Pursuing our employ-

ments with ardour for one hour, may frequently be more productive than a languid and conſtrained application could be in three. Repeat frequently to yourſelf, "it is my duty and my happineſs to be induſtrious, as much as lazineſs would be my ſhame and my miſery. I might this day give myſelf up to the pleaſures in which my imagination and my ſenſes ſolicit me to indulge, but will employ myſelf according to the dictates of my reaſon and conſcience. I have a plan to follow: I muſt not allow myſelf to deviate from it without very cogent reaſons: I ſhould fail in my duty, if I was only to purſue it occaſionally."

Be cautious, my dear ſon, in regard to your pleaſures. Your application to your ſtudies gives you a claim to ſome relaxation, and recreations are never ſo agreeable as when we have performed our duties. Never are we cheerful with more ſatisfaction than after having been wiſely employed in ſerious matters; in fact, true wiſdom, far from being gloomy, is what procures us the moſt unclouded ſerenity. Enjoy the innocent pleaſures afforded you by the view of nature, by the fine arts, by friendſhip and society. My parental tenderneſs ſolicits you to this, and I am no leſs deſirous you ſhould partake of innocent pleaſures, than that you ſhould apply aſſiduouſly to your ſtudies. I am a

man advanced in years, who remembers he has been young, and I am fond of thoſe young people who are in the habit of reflecting that they will not always remain ſo.

The choice and degree of our pleaſures certainly requires a continual and wiſe circumſpection. Thoſe fields enamelled with flowers which we meet with in our way, offer us ſcenes of agreeable repoſe, but we ought to ſtop in them merely as long as is neceſſary to acquire freſh ſtrength, and purſue the end we have in view with freſh vigour. Taken in this view, pleaſure itſelf may become a virtue, and thus you may more eaſily eſcape the ſecret danger with which it is attended. In frequenting places of public amuſement, go there with ſome ſenſible and virtuous friend rather than alone. He will have an eye to what may eſcape your attention, and you will watch over yourſelf from friendſhip and deference for him. A walk, the repreſentation of a good theatrical piece, a concert, a moderate game at cards with friends, are pleaſures which we may allow ourſelves, by way of refreſhment. But fly carefully from thoſe dreadful ſcenes in which the paſſion of gaming rages, and in which many a well diſpoſed young man has loſt his taſte for ſtudy, his fortune, and contaminated his morals. I ſay nothing of thoſe

houſes in which, under pretence of a country excurſion, young men give themſelves up without ſhame to libertiniſm and drunkenneſs. You have too juſt an abhorrence of theſe ever to expoſe yourſelf to their ſeductions, and unleſs you was to ceaſe entirely to be what you are, I need not warn you againſt theſe kind of dangers.

Aſſociate eaſily with every body, but reſtrict your friendſhips to few; to have a great number is commonly a mark of having no true ones. It ſhows that we have neither judgment nor experience; it proves us eager, light, and inconſtant in our attachments: and the deſire of pleaſing and captivating a great variety of perſons, eaſily leads to compliances which at firſt are merely weakneſſes, but which often degenerate into extravagancies, and frequently, alas too frequently, leads to vice and crimes. With a profuſion of friends could you poſſibly remain attached to your duties, and maſter of your time? Beſides, our true friend is not always he who ſuddenly excites our partiality. The intimacy of cloſe connection is frequently neceſſary to bring us acquainted with his moſt valuable qualities. The friend who deſerves this noble title is he who ſhares our ſorrows, who grieves when we are afflicted, and whoſe tears flow over thoſe diſtreſſes he cannot alleviate. His aſſiſtance

is given before we requeſt it, he loves us with ſincerity, and, even at the riſk of diſpleaſing us, refuſes to flatter our paſſions. But how ſeldom do we meet with ſuch a friend!

Be as much on your guard, my dear ſon, againſt every kind of intimacy with the declared infidel, as with the canting hypocrite, and always conſider that man as unworthy your friendſhip, who has not ſufficient virtue to be the friend of God.

Learn to take pleaſure in ſolitude, and to find it in amuſing yourſelf alone with muſic, with a uſeful and entertaining book, with drawing, with painting; or in walks and rides in the open country, in a garden, or in a wood. Keep alive your ſenſibility to the ſcenery of nature, to the pleaſures of harmony; let the beauties you diſcover in theſe objects prove to you a ſource of enjoyment, which being frequently repeated, may conſtantly lead you to adore the Author of theſe wonders. Thoſe amuſements, which are procured without purchaſe, are within the reach of every one, and are intended for all men, but which ſo few know how to reliſh, are preferable to all others, and are the moſt laſting.

Acquire a lively ſenſe of the ſoothing ſatisfaction attending on having done your duty, on having chiefly had its performance in view; let the de-

lightful ſentiment it produces in your mind, ſerve daily to encreaſe your attachment to piety and virtue: it is a moſt encouraging ſatisfaction, a conſtant ſource of delight to the ſoul.

It is a bad omen when a young man can find no pleaſure except in the ſociety of perſons of his own age, and never ſeeks the company of men of a mature age, and even of thoſe ſtill farther advanced in life. He ought to make uſe of the gravity of their well formed characters, to repreſs his ficklenefs and impetuoſity: it is in their ſociety that his prudence may acquire maturity, and their approbation ought to ſatisfy his love of glory.

Some learned men may certainly be reproached with being of difficult acceſs to young people animated by a deſire of information, and who, both on approaching and on quitting them, experience the moſt repulſive coldneſs. But it is a ſtill greater fault in a young man not to ſeek carefully, and with a modeſt caution, every allowable method of obtaining the ſociety of perſons of merit. Never be ſo preſumptuous as not to eſteem ſuch an advantage, or to believe yourſelf ſufficiently enlightened to deſpiſe the advice of thoſe whoſe capacity authoriſes them to give it. Teſtify your gratitude to them by demonſtrations of reſpect, without fatiguing them with flattering compliments. Be

ſincere without indiſcretion, and let not a fooliſh babble take from you the praiſe-worthy deſire of improvement. This deſire, accompanied by modeſty, will always make you converſe in an agreeable manner, and conceal your trifling faults from obſervation. If the reſpectable man, whoſe ſociety you ſeek without pretending to force him into intimacy, deigns to admit you to the free uſe of his library, to make you ſhare in his amuſements, and invites you to his table, form yourſelf on his example. Do not, however, aim at being like him in every thing, and remember that the deportment which is proper in a man of his age, is not in every point becoming a young man of yours, and that he may have failings which you ought to be on your guard againſt imitating. Attending to theſe precautions, beſides the advantages already enumerated, the fear of incurring the diſapprobation of ſo worthy a patron, will preſerve you from many youthful errors: whilſt your reſpect for him, and the ſociety to which he admits you, will ſerve to poliſh your manners. Whenever you feel yourſelf inclined to act contrary to reaſon, aſk yourſelf what this reſpectable man would think of your conduct, and whether you ſhould dare to acquaint him with it. Say to yourſelf, ſhould I not give him cauſe to be aſhamed of his connection with me, and ſhould

I dare to appear before him without ſhame, after having fallen into ſome ſerious fault?

With regard to your female acquaintance, I can only give you general inſtructions. Watch over yourſelf narrowly, my dear ſon, and reſiſt every inclination which you would bluſh to own to the friend from whom you would expect the ſevereſt cenſure. O my ſon! love is a ſeducing paſſion, but religion and vigilance furniſh us with ſuch arms of defence as are proof againſt all its ſeductions. Its voice is enchanting, but religion, which calls out to us, "*How ſhall I commit this great ſin?*" is of divine efficacy for diſpelling its enchantments. Dwell frequently on the thought that this natural propenſity is impreſſed on us by God himſelf, and that it will be allowable for you to follow its impulſe without wounding the purity of your character, when, having attained the proper age of forming the ſoft ties of a lawful marriage, conformably to the wiſe and holy views of Providence, for the propagation of mankind, you will find your felicity in the ſociety of a wife, to whom love and friendſhip will have united you. You are as dear to me as myſelf, and I would prefer death to the overwhelming knowledge of your being abandoned to vice. Let this paternal love penetrate your heart, let it ſerve to ſtimulate you to care and vigilance:

but dwell ſtill more on the love of your heavenly Father, which you would renounce, in a manner you ought to tremble at, were you to allow yourſelf in voluntary vice. Yes, my ſon, my dear ſon, you who can conſtitute my felicity as long as you remain faithful to your duty, do not neglect, I beſeech you, to arm your ſuſceptible heart now, in the following, and in every period of your life, againſt the miſchief of a tender foible. Create to yourſelf ſerious occupations, and even in your hours of relaxation do not be entirely idle. Be temperate in your food, and moderate in your drink. Abſtain, your father conjures you, abſtain from reading thoſe books in which vice is diſguiſed, cloathed with the charms of poetry or eloquence, and preſented in the moſt dangerous manner, ſeducing the underſtanding in order to corrupt the heart. Never allow your eyes to dwell on pictures deſcribing voluptuous ſcenes; whilſt they ſeduce the imagination they are fatal to innocence, of which they ſtifle every idea. Let not your eyes gain the maſtery of you in female ſociety: ſubject them to your direction, and ſmother in its birth every illegitimate deſire. Modeſty impoſes this law, and its office is to conſtrain you to its obedience. Dread the firſt ſtep towards vice, it leads to an approaching fall, and terminates in the fall

itſelf. Your good diſpoſitions, however, lead me to hope that vice will not eaſily ſeduce you, when it appears in its natural deformity. What is moſt dangerous for a well inclined young man of ſenſibility, is when paſſion is diſguiſed under the maſk of friendſhip and warrantable inclination. He may converſe whole years with the moſt amiable female in ſociety: He feels nothing for them beyond eſteem and friendly regard, and ſuſpects no danger: he ſtill preſerves his liberty; and, at length, the intimacy ariſing from this innocent friendſhip encreaſes his confidence in the purity of his views without leading him to deviate from it. His modeſt conduct procures him a greater degree of confidence, and his modeſt reſerve is rewarded by encreaſing teſtimonies of regard. He ventures ſome little freedom of behaviour, though entirely under the guidance of innocence. He allows himſelf now and then in ſome little familiarities which he would himſelf ſhudder at, could he ſuppoſe he would overſtep the bounds of decency. Not aware of the nature of his ſentiments, he thinks himſelf only attached to virtue in a female friend for whom he has already a dangerous paſſion: and thus, by an imperceptible progreſs, he finds himſelf under the dominion of a vicious inclination, which has ſeduced him under the appearance of friendſhip.

O! then, if the vigilance of a friend, or a ſenſe of religion, does not perform towards him the part of a guardian angel, one unhappy moment may be his ruin. Be therefore always on your guard, my beloved ſon, and feel always ſome miſtruſt of your heart in your moſt allowable intimacies with women, whoſe ſociety is however the beſt calculated to form and poliſh your manners. Be aſſured that every inclination towards a woman, which weakens your aſſiduity in the performance of your duty, your attachment to ſtudy, the pleaſure you find in the ſociety of your intimate friend, and your ſatisfaction in the duties of piety, cannot fail to become pernicious to you whether it be ſo already or not.

That you may learn to know and to correct your errors in this point, and in every other duty and circumſtance of your life, examine yourſelf at the close of each day. As an affectionate father, I earneſtly recommend to you this exact daily examination of your heart, of thoſe diſpoſitions which have influenced whatever you have ſaid, thought, or done, whether during your ſtudies, your recreations, in private or in company. Put all theſe queſtions to yourſelf. What ſentiments and conduct have I purſued this morning, this afternoon, and this evening? What account can I give of myſelf? Have I proved a friend to myſelf, to duty

to induſtry; a rational and ſociable friend, a friend to religion, and faithful to God? O! my ſon, if your attachment to God and to virtue ſhould diminiſh, and that each day you was to acquire more learning till you became a prodigy of ſcience, your ſituation would only become each day more deplorable.

I now proceed to give you ſome advice concerning your ſtudies, and the economy with which you ought to regulate your expences.

On the Method of Studying.

The ancient authors which you have already gone through muſt ſtill occupy you, my ſon, during the courſe of your academical ſtudies, and you ſhould make it a rule to read ſome portion of them every day, particularly thoſe that have moſt merit. Dedicate one particular hour to this employment. This courſe of reading regularly purſued will qualify you to acquire a profound knowledge of the ſuperior ſciences. In the ancients we find the ſources and models of hiſtory, eloquence, and poetry; and in many caſes they are our inſtructors in philoſophy. This ſcience, as well as hiſtory, the knowledge of which is indiſpenſible for a man of letters, cannot be learnt with more ſucceſs than by a fa-

miliar acquaintance with the ancient writers, and the better you underſtand their language, the more pleaſure and advantage you will derive from their works. The more you advance in them, the more you will be convinced that the *chef d'œuvres* of antiquity are not books which we ought to run over without reflection in the inferior claſſes, and only with a view to attain a knowledge of words. The moſt eſteemed authors amongſt the ancients were not only great geniuſes, learned men whoſe knowledge was not confined to their cloſets; they were, beſides, great men, who governed the ſtate, commanded armies, and who had uſefully improved and employed the powers of their underſtandings in the moſt important affairs of life. I am well aware that our veneration for the ancients is exaggerated, that we deify their writings, with a view to depreciate the moderns; and that they are frequently ſtudied with no other view than to make a vain diſplay of the knowledge acquired in them. I know they are read from pedantry, or a kind of intemperate taſte, often to the prejudice of religion and at the riſk of corrupting the purity of the heart: that ſome become ſo attached to their manner of writing, as to be diſguſted with the ſtyle of the Holy Scriptures, and to eſteem nothing juſt and beautiful, but what Homer, Plato, Xenophon, Horace,

and Cicero, have ſaid and thought. Nevertheleſs we are called upon to read carefully the beſt writings of the ancients, propoſing chiefly in ſo doing, to enlighten our underſtanding by their learning, to enrich our memories by their information, and to warm our imaginations by the fire which glows in their writings: we may, however, employ ourſelves leſs on their purely ſpeculative philoſophy, which requires a greater ſtretch of underſtanding, and furniſhes leſs nouriſhment to the mind. Do not ſuppoſe, from what I ſay, that I am an enemy to ſound philoſophy: I could not be ſo without being an enemy to reaſon. I have myſelf given you a ſlight knowledge of modern philoſophy; you muſt not neglect to engage again in a courſe of it, and to apply to it, provided it is not at the expence of the other ſciences. It would be an error in you to ſuppoſe, that becauſe you are thoroughly poſſeſſed of the rules and principles of ſome particular ſyſtem, you poſſeſs the ſcience itſelf, and that you have the talent of thinking with equal juſtice and ſolidity. You can no more have a right thus to flatter yourſelf, than to ſuppoſe yourſelf endowed with the ſublime talent of eloquence, becauſe you are well inſtructed in its rules. You will ſome day have an opportunity of knowing many pretended philoſophers, who have their ſyſtem well arranged

in their heads, and who, notwithſtanding, are as poor writers, as ſad orators, and as pitiful profeſſors, as if they had not the ſlighteſt knowledge of philoſophy. Accuſtom yourſelf early to reduce the principles of logic, which you comprehend, into practice, and continue this uſeful exerciſe under an enlightened maſter. By this means you will ſee that there is a great difference between the rule and its application. Employ yourſelf on the ideas, propoſitions, and proofs of natural law and morals, as the eaſieſt conceived, and of general utility. The more you learn to think and judge juſtly, the more qualified you will be to venture on the ſtudy of ſpeculative philoſophy and metaphyſics, without being in danger of being bewildered in philoſophical reveries. You certainly cannot acquire too juſt and preciſe a mode of thinking, but it might happen that, too much taken with the myſterious ſubtleties of philoſophy, which are ſo captivating to a young man's underſtanding, who is led away by an ardent deſire of learning, that you might devote yourſelf to it for a ſeries of years, without acquiring a proper mode of thinking, and without being able to write any thing but a trifling letter, a ridiculous diſſertation, a diſcourſe entirely devoid of common ſenſe. Reflection and ſound criticiſm are neceſſary to a juſt mode of thinking, together with a de-

gree of clear preciſion adapted to each particular caſe: reading, taſte, and experience, are neceſſary to our thinking delicately and properly on each ſubject which preſents itſelf. A ſuperficial ſtudy of philoſophy tends only to confuſe the mind, and to promote vain talking; but to ſtudy it profoundly, making uſe, at the ſame time, of our underſtandings, is the way to form our judgment, and teaches us to become more reſerved in our deciſions.

— Keep a journal of what you read, tranſcribing into it the moſt beautiful paſſages you meet with, which you would do well to learn by heart. In general, purſue the method I directed you to follow, which is, not to engage in *many different kinds of reading at the same time*, but to read *much;* not *all sorts* of books, but the *best* in each kind, and that over and over again. In reading, obſerve the rule I have given you for doing it with advantage, not ſo much to apply to it all the powers of your memory, as thoſe of your underſtanding, not to run through an author with an impatient curioſity, but to follow him ſtep by ſtep, attentively obſerving the courſe of his ideas; ſtudying to comprehend his plan, to take in the whole of it carefully, to remark its developement, attending to the force of each proof, both in itſelf and according to the

light in which the author places it; remarking each new and ſtriking thought, the expreſſion of each noble and energetic ſentiment, and to collect together in a ſhort extract whatever is beſt and moſt important in the book. By continuing to obſerve this method, my dear ſon, you will have read much, not as many do, from oſtentation and merely to adorn your memory, but for the improvement of your underſtanding and your heart, which will be by theſe means truly enriched. As to the order to be purſued in your reading, the ancients ought to precede the moderns, which you may read after them, without however laying them even then entirely aſide. Read the good writers of the age of Lewis the Fourteenth. You will find they have formed themſelves on the examples of the ancients. Read them, my ſon, and let their mode of thinking animate yours. You will have no cauſe to regret the time you devote to them, any more than that you may employ in ſtudying Engliſh, German, and perhaps Italian. As a man of letters, it is neceſſary you ſhould expreſs yourſelf well in Latin: therefore do not neglect to accuſtom yourſelf to write and ſpeak it: the facility you acquire in it will ſome day be very uſeful to you. Called upon to live in the great world, you muſt conform your language to that uſed at court,

which is alſo that of the beſt modern authors; and if you aſpire to a place amongſt the ſcholars of your country, you muſt poſſeſs your own tongue ſo as to expreſs yourſelf with facility, correctneſs, and agreeably, in happy and well choſen terms. Attach yourſelf, for this reaſon, to the peruſal of the beſt works produced by your countrymen, and do not think it a credit to you not to know your own tongue better than your footman. From this time you ought, with the aſſiſtance of a good guide, to form your epiſtolary ſtile, and try your abilities in other compoſitions eaſier than diſcourſes on eloquence, which you had better defer attempting till the laſt years of your reſidence at the academy. Beware eſpecially of taking too ſoon upon you to become an author, whether in proſe or verſe. It is neceſſary that genius ſhould be nouriſhed with ſolid acquirements before it can produce any thing, and the itch of writing ſhould not be confounded with real talent. The rage for authorſhip is like a malignant fever: The ſymptoms uneaſy itching, which changes into a devouring heat, which exhauſts the genius, and thoſe powers of application which ſhould be devoted to the ſtudy of the ſciences. I have already exhorted you to read the claſſical writings of your own countrymen; attach yourſelf to thoſe with which I have already brought

you acquainted, and to all of the ſame deſcription. Preſerve yourſelf from the contagion of reading nothing but journals, periodical papers, and literary gazettes. Thoſe portable dictionaries, thoſe abridgments of the ſciences, which are now ſo much the faſhion, characteriſe the frivolity of our age. I ſhall allow you a ſpecific ſum for the purchaſe of books; follow your own taſte in thoſe you buy: I only deſire to reſerve to myſelf a right of giving you my opinion concerning them. Do not decide too ſpeedily, according to the judgment pronounced by the reviewers: neither be eager to procure every good book, but be a good economiſt of thoſe leiſure hours which you can devote to reading a conſiderable number of the beſt. I purpoſe leaving you five or ſix years at the univerſity. Your object there muſtnot be to read every thing, but to confine yourſelf to what is moſt eſſential; and whilſt you acquire a taſte for reading which may ſerve to influence your future life, learn to know the characters of the many excellent works, in reading which you may employ yourſelf after your academical ſtudies are finiſhed. To acquire this knowledge endeavour to procure admiſſion into ſome extenſive and well choſen library; endeavour to form intimacies with perſons of great erudition, an acceſs to the principal bookſellers, and

procure one of the moſt approved literary journals. Remember, however, that more than a mere acquaintance with books is requiſite in the world, and that you may find yourſelf much at a loſs in ſociety, if you are not converſant with geography, hiſtory, and what is called political economy. A ſcholar is required not to be ignorant of our globe. Rather reſtrict your peruſal of works of mere ingenuity, than forget what you know of geography, and what relates to it: I ſhould alſo prefer your knowing one language fewer, rather than ſee you loſe the good hand-writing I took the pains to have you taught by the beſt maſters, and forget the inſtructions I myſelf gave you in mathematics.

I wiſh you to communicate the journal of your ſtudies to me every three months. If you continue it in the manner I taught you, it will give me pleaſure to ſee what you read, and how you read. It will alſo be a great ſatisfaction to yourſelf at a certain age, and an agreeable retroſpect, to ſee the catalogue of all the books you have formerly read, the extracts you have made from them, and the opinions you formed concerning them, ſome of which you will approve, whilſt you correct others. I do not abſolutely diſcourage you from reading ſome inferior works, in the hope that they will diſ-

guſt you from what is ſo. But as to dangerous books, however delicately, however ingeniouſly, they may be written, you would riſk too much were you to read them now, notwithſtanding the good principles I know you to poſſeſs. You muſt not ſuppoſe, my dear ſon, that I wiſh to impede your amuſement; your ſatisfaction is as dear to me as my own, and you know how much pleaſure I take in lively clever books. But wit diſplayed in licentious writings, however exquiſite, were it even the wit of a Crebillon, appears to me fit only to be compared to a beautiful woman in a houſe of proſtitution, and who is the more ſeducing in proportion as ſhe diſguiſes vice under the exterior of virtue and innocence.

Make uſe of your times of vacation in reading and in repeating the leſſons of your profeſſors. You might paſs your life in their different claſſes, without making any conſiderable progreſs in the ſciences, if you do not co-operate with them in your own inſtruction by the aſſiſtance of your books, by daily application and reflection. The public leſſons, commonly called examinations, are moſt uſeful, for which reaſon I recommend it to you to frequent them. Let me deſire you to attend to the important advice I am going to give you, throughout the whole courſe of your acade-

mical ſtudies. Have it always present to your mind that the particular ſcience to which, after mature deliberation on your talents, and after conſulting circumſtances and judicious perſons, you have devoted yourſelf; that ſcience, by which you are to be conducted to ſome employment uſeful to ſociety, ought to be the prime object of your ſtudies. Conſecrate regularly a conſiderable part of each day to it, and do not allow yourſelf to be frequently turned aſide by other ſtudies from your principal object, however thorny and difficult the path may be which leads to it. It would have ſad conſequences for you, if the love of the belles lettres, and of the fine arts, were to ſtifle your attachment to the ſcience which is to qualify you for the performance of the duties of that ſituation in which you are intended to be placed. The affectation of wit and fine talk, is often a dangerous malady to many young men. He who brings to a public employment nothing but incapacity and repugnance, would have been very differently qualified for it, and have engaged in it with more ſucceſs and ſatisfaction, if he had ſtudied to fit himſelf for the performance of his duties rather than to gratify his taſte. Be the more on your guard againſt ſuch a dangerous abuſe in the purſuit of the belles lettres, inaſmuch as it is what young men are particu-

larly inclined to fall into. They are intended to give you a taſte for ſolid learning, not to deſtroy it: they ought to purify and improve your taſte and your judgment, not to debaſe and ſtifle them. In a word, the true uſe of them is not to make you a frivolous and poliſhed man of letters, but a man of ſolid learning, and of a character fitted to attract eſteem.

On the Regulation of Expences.

My ſon, be a good economiſt. Economy is not only commendable in itſelf, but alſo from the influence it has on more eſſential virtues. There is no prince, however rich he may be, who may not value himſelf on his economy, and to whom prodigality does not attach blame. Thus, whoever does not know how to regulate his expences, will often put himſelf in a ſituation, if not to want neceſſaries, at leaſt to loſe the opportunity, the power, the compoſure of mind, together with many other means of doing good; and in many circumſtances will find himſelf led to act contrary to the exact principles of probity. Economy is conſequently a diſtinguiſhed virtue, and I recommend it particularly to you, as it is not often the virtue of young people. Learn, then, to be economical

even in trifles, which, taken ſingly, coſt little, and by this means more eaſily ſeduce; but, in the long run, and taken altogether, come to be a conſiderable ſum ſquandered away. That economy, which conſiſts in not purchaſing uſeleſs things, is, according to the opinion of a Roman Conſul, whoſe dignity placed him above kings, and whoſe diſintereſtedneſs ſecured him from the temptation of accepting the moſt coſtly preſents, *a great revenue*. Many things are worth the price ſet upon them; but, if neither neceſſity nor propriety call upon us to purchaſe them, it is only faſhion, the reputation of an artiſt, the deſire of whatever pleaſes us by its novelty, or its rarity, which induce us to procure them. All theſe things, my ſon, muſt be reckoned amongſt thoſe which you ought to deny yourſelf: conſider yourſelf as too poor to purchaſe them, and you will have the more money to ſupply your real wants, your prudent conveniencies, and to ſpend in acts of beneficence, and in buying books. Would it not be ſhameful, if, to acquire ſome very expenſive piece of furniture, merely agreeable to the ſight, you reduced yourſelf to an incapacity of paying the expence of ſome reaſonable recreation, or of giving a friendly reception to thoſe with whom you aſſociate? Though the purchaſe of a valuable book is a reaſonable expence,

it is often much more praiſe-worthy to dedicate the money it would coſt to the relief of a perſon in diſtreſs. Never put it out of your power to alleviate the melancholy lot of him whom you ſee in want. Be on your guard againſt ſelf-indulgence, ſo far as now and then to deny yourſelf ſome gratification, though it may be perfectly innocent, and attended with little expence, that you may gain a power over your inclinations, and keep within the proper bounds of your fortune. You muſt learn, by making a proper uſe of what belongs to me, to regulate what you will one day poſſeſs of your own with propriety. I need not warn you againſt thoſe fooliſh diſſipations which involve thoſe who practiſe them in debt. I well know your prudence on this head. But mere want of attention in regard to ſmall expences, leads us to borrow at firſt with timidity; then we are often forced to become diſhonourably in debt, and, in the eyes of reaſon and religion, we muſt appear in the light of plunderers. Examine your accounts each week, and every month; at the cloſe of each month you may ſend them to me. Act openly with your father. Some expences, imprudently incurred, will not hinder me from ſending you the ſum I have aſſigned you, but I ſhall not encreaſe it but with my own entire free will, and according

as I think proper. Make yourſelf worthy of my care, by the ſincerity of your attachment to me, and I ſhall, by my tender ſolicitude for your welfare, endeavour to deſerve ſuch a ſon. That regard to economy, which I recommend, by preſerving you from gaming, drinking, and extravagance in dreſs, will alſo preſerve you from the dangers and ridicule which attend them. Without a prudent economy, all your application to ſtudy would not ſave your reputation for regularity and good conduct from ſuffering; and from hence would ariſe much detriment even to your ſtudies themſelves. But, had you acquired the utmoſt degree of learning which can be attained, and was you wanting in no other kind of merit whatever, you may yet, from ignorance of economy, be incapable of managing the affairs of any public employment, and find yourſelf a very diſtreſſed father of a family. The propriety of our outward appearance depends on a variety of ſmall things, which, however unimportant they may appear, call for attention and care on our part, without requiring much capacity, and ſtill leſs much erudition: and this is what makes it ſhameful for all men who have ſenſe enough to underſtand theſe concerns, and ſtill more ſo for men of learning, to neglect making uſe of their underſtandings in points wherein

even the weakeſt is not wanting in comprehenſion, and to be negligent where he cannot be ſo, without expoſing himſelf to indigence, to contempt, and to deriſion. Order is as neceſſary in a family, as a good articulation is in a well-framed diſcourſe; and order is not leſs the fruit, than the ſource of economy. How many things, eſſential to a proper appearance, or ſimply convenient, are preſerved in good condition, in proportion to the careful and regular uſe made of them. What we ſave in this manner, is the fruit of a prudent care, and every man who thinks properly, will conſider it a duty incumbent on him to attend to it. Suppoſe that, without wounding propriety, you can, in the ſpace of two or three years, ſave the expence of a ſuit of cloaths, and that with what that would have coſt, you procure one to an indigent friend, are you not ſenſible that there would be ſomething noble in a careful economy, which would procure you ſuch a ſatisfaction? Conſidering economy in this point of view, it cannot but appear to you as commendable: it is no longer a ſimple advice, given as by prudence for the promotion of virtue; it is virtue itſelf, reduced into action. Riches are the means by which we may attain many excellent ends, conſequently, to diſſipate them is worſe than folly. An inconſiderate negligence, or an improper uſe

of our fortune, ſerves to feed every irregular affection of the heart, from which, in reality, ſprings entirely the little care we take of it, whether brought on by indolence, ſenſuality, pride, careleſsneſs, love of pleaſure, or any other vicious diſpoſition. This conſideration makes me affirm, that want of economy is worſe than folly, inaſmuch as it inſenſibly corrupts the heart, even though it was not to bring on worldly ruin. A ſpendthrift can neither be an intelligent nor a virtuous man; and the qualities of the ſpendthrift may exiſt in the diſpoſal of the ſmalleſt, as well as the largeſt fortune. Accuſtom yourſelf, therefore, to the practice of economy from your youth, that you may be certain of poſſeſſing this precious quality as you advance in life. An extravagant young man, who is reclaimed or reduced to poverty by melancholy experience, eaſily becomes avaricious in old age; and I conjure you, my dear ſon, never to let avarice ſtain my family, any more than intemperance and prodigality! Do not think it beneath you to have an eye to certain things which do not appear very eſſential, but let an attention to theſe make you contract a habit of regularity and good order in your moſt important affairs. I ſhould preſcribe theſe rules to you; and I ſhould equally confine your expences to what is proper for your

ſtation, was I even much richer than I am, and this becauſe I love you rationally, and wiſh to give you ſuch an education as reaſon and paternal tenderneſs require. It will not be a blind affection, but a ſubmiſſion to the laws of conſcience, which will ever guide me in what I appropriate to your expences. So conduct yourſelf, my dear ſon, at the univerſity, as you would wiſh to have done when you arrive at old age. Live ſo as to recollect without ſhame, or rather with heartfelt ſatisfaction, your reſidence at the univerſity. I here give you my ſolemn and tender benediction; and I implore the Almighty to reſtore you to my arms, enriched with all the treaſures of learning and virtue, which may make you a uſeful member of ſociety. I ſhould ſee you return with indifference, was you to be reſtored to me leſs virtuous, though more learned: but if, added to great improvement in uſeful knowledge, you have alſo improved in religion and virtue, I ſhall receive you with tranſport. Was you the greateſt genius of the age, without being a pious and a virtuous man, I ſhould grievouſly lament having given you birth. Adieu, my beloved, my worthy ſon.

MORAL CHARACTERS.

CRITO:

Or, Methodical Sensuality.

In the world, people give the title of gentleman, of worthy man, and a man of good behaviour, to thoſe whom a prudent activity enables to regulate their conduct in ſuch a manner, as to have acquired for themſelves a good appearance, reputation, conveniences, pleaſures, and the power of living as they like.

Crito has, for twenty years, lived on his own eſtate, ſingle and without a family. He has the character of a man of merit, a man of buſineſs, who entertains his friends and acquaintances handſomely, and whom his neighbours reckon happy. He is never unoccupied, nor has he time to indulge in the exceſſes of which idleneſs is the ſource. He

every morning ſuperintends the country buſineſs: He informs himſelf thoroughly of whatever is uſeful, and relates to it: He gives it all his care, he executes it well, he enriches himſelf, and acquires the lands of his poor neighbours, but without taking advantage of their diſtreſſes; and, in the ſpace of twenty years, he has added three other noble eſtates to that which he inherited from his anceſtors.

He never intentionally offended any one: he pays his workmen with punctuality, and there is not a pariſh in all his poſſeſſions, that does not taſte of his liberality. Does a church want the ornament of an altar, of a bell, or an organ of more effect? he ſpares no expence. He receives every one with welcome, but more particularly thoſe who, among other qualities, have a taſte for country buſineſs. His table, always well ſerved, without luxury or ſordid parſimony, is what is perfectly ſuitable to a man of his fortune. He ſeldom indulges himſelf in hunting, which would waſte precious time, which he knows ſo much better how to employ. He examines leaſes, he inſpects the bills preſented to him, he overlooks his workmen, and, as he expreſſes it, builds for poſterity. On one ſpot, improper for tillage, he plants a wood, or digs a quarry, which may become a benefit to the

country. Not one idle moment: from morning to night he is ſeen buſied in his various occupations. He lives in harmony with his neighbours, by whom he makes himſelf beloved, and who praiſe the happy and well regulated life he leads. In fact, what could he change for the better in his mode of life? Very little, it ſhould ſeem. Is it not all well ordered, and agreeable to the principal object he has in view? Yes; but what is his grand object? For what does he ſo live? About what does he occupy himſelf, and his labours ſo methodically regulated? To what point are they directed? Perhaps he does not well know himſelf. He gives himſelf up to a confuſed idea of what can render him happy. It ſeems to him a proper thing to be always employed, to do more than people of his own rank, to acquire more property, and to be able to give himſelf credit for it. Is that true happineſs, or the purpoſe for which life was given him?

To make you a judge of what Crito does to render himſelf happy, obſerve his pretended felicity, with the eyes of reaſon. View him on his death-bed. He breathes his laſt with the title of maſter of ſuch and ſuch lands. Was it then the buſineſs of his life, to labour to enrich himſelf, and to leave at his death ſix manors? Was he ſerviceable and

kind? Did his dependants find in him ſupport and counsel? Did he ſhew himſelf diſpoſed to provide for the maintenance of his faithful domeſtics? Did he diſpenſe of his ſuperfluity with as much kindneſs as prudence? He was unwearied in the view of making himſelf rich; attentive and regular in every endeavour to have his houſe commodious, well furniſhed, and agreeable to his taſte, and ſuch as to do him honour; nor did he ever indulge in any exceſs, leſt he ſhould hurt his health, or diſturb his occupations. With all his punctuality, he lived not for ſociety, but ſolely for himſelf; for his own profit, and not to fulfil a duty. He lived a life methodically ſenſual, and it is thus that moſt men live.

If Crito would have made uſe of his reaſon, would he have loſt ſight of the purpoſe for which he was ſent into the world? Could he have been ignorant that his ſoul was of more dignity than his body? that the good qualities of the heart were preferable to the acquiſition of new eſtates, to a well-covered table, and to the admiration of his neighbours; that there was more wiſdom in acquiring the goods which remain to us beyond the grave, than thoſe which we muſt abandon at the end of a few years; that it is far more honourable to be a wiſe and beneficent man, uſeful to the public, and pious, than

to be the wealthieſt perſon of the country; that there is infinitely more merit in diſcharging duties towards God and his neighbour, than in ſhewing himſelf the moſt rigid obſerver of the regulation of an extenſive eſtabliſhment.

EUPHEMON:

OR

The character that contrasts to that of Crito.

EUPHEMON finds himſelf in a ſituation almoſt ſimilar to that of Crito; and he knows how to take care of his eſtate, and to enjoy it. He labours as far as his condition requires, and he regards his attention to buſineſs as an obligation which God has impoſed upon him, to provide for his own ſubſiſtence and that of others; in order to render himſelf and them better informed, more content, and more happy. Theſe are the grand objects to which all his occupations are directed; and if he allows himſelf in a wiſh to become rich, it is only in as much as it accords with his duties towards God and

his fellow-creatures. Exact in rising early, he is not less exact in his devotions. His first care is to begin the day by the exercise of a piety beneficial to his soul, and likely to procure to him a blessing from above; after which, he attends to his temporal affairs. There is not a moment in the day in which he is not employed about some thing useful; but his ardour in business does not actuate him as it does Crito, to puzzle himself in details, which his steward is more capable to execute than himself. He watches over the interests of his tenants, he lends a helping hand to the poor and willing labourer, and urges him to work who is not inclined to do it of himself. Without losing any thing of the respect due to a superior, who from duty wishes to maintain order and subordination, he knows how to be familiar with them who are his dependants, and they honour him as much as they love him. The expence which Crito is at to decorate the churches in his different parishes, is consecrated by Euphemon to the support of schools, which he provides with good masters, whom he pensions decently, and in proportion to the pains they take to instruct well the young people. He is still more attentive in choosing for the churches, in his patronage, the most enlightened and pious pastors, whose zeal he encourages by his kind at-

tentions, and by preſenting them with books, and other uſeful things which their ſituation does not permit them to procure. Not leſs hoſpitable than Crito, beſides the friends which he receives at his table, and to whom he endeavours to render his ſociety agreeable, he maintains more than one old domeſtic labourer; more than one aged perſon, and more than one in ill health, are cheriſhed and aſſiſted by his benevolence. He has a perſon in whom he can confide, particularly employed to inform himſelf of thoſe in diſtreſs, and in want, which they are unwilling to diſcloſe, that he may convey aſſiſtance to them by a third hand. Euphemon erects buildings for uſe and convenience, but always in the laudable deſign to find employment for thoſe who are unoccupied, from indolence, or from want of work. He will not exerciſe his benevolence in ſuch a manner as to encourage the lazineſs or indiſcretion of thoſe who might be inclined to abuſe his bounties. His liberality is circumſpect, and ſometimes, from a principle of goodneſs, he even aſſumes the appearance of being harſh and ſevere. He is ſenſible that the cuſtomary ſervices which are due to him from his tenantry are oppreſſive to them, and as prudence will not allow him to diſpenſe with them entirely, he contrives however to lighten the burthen, to gratify one

from time to time with money, another with grain, a third, by releaſing him from ſome cuſtomary ſervice, and thus to ſoften by equity the rigour of what he has a right to demand. As lord of the place, he ſets the example to all thoſe who hold of him; he is the life of his own houſe; and all his cares, all his endeavours, are directed to do as much good as is in his power. Though he has no children of his own, he is never without ſome young people of his family who are educated in his houſe. The conduct and manners of his domeſtics are to him the objects of an attention which wiſely combines ſeverity with goodneſs; and, in guarding them from idleneſs and vice, he encourages them his example to be aſſiduous in the exerciſes of devotion. Euphemon has continued this kind of life during twenty years; he has made no new purchaſes, nay, there are ſome years in which he has treſpaſſed on his capital; but, in comparing him with Crito, you will own that he has conducted himſelf much better. He has not only managed well his domeſtic affairs, but he has made his fortune and his credit ſubſervient to the dictates of his conſcience; he has rendered himſelf happy, by promoting the good of others. How much is he to be commended; but how few Euphemons are there in the world!

CHRYSES;

OR,

The Rich Man, who runs from pleasure to pleasure, in search of a happiness which he seeks for in vain.

CHRYSES, poſſeſſed of a conſiderable eſtate, at the age of twenty-five, propoſes to become happy, by giving himſelf up to every ſpecies of pleaſure, which, though permitted in the main, ceaſe to be ſo, when we devote ourſelves entirely to them. Liſtleſsneſs has obliged him to create to himſelf amuſements, and his ſenſes and his imagination have determined his choice. Always unſettled, he begins a thouſand things of which he ſoon tires; his new reſolves do not long appear worthy to occupy him; he paſſes to ſome other object, which is equally incapable to fix him; and, wiſhing to live according to his fancy, his is an unquiet life, which only gratifies the ſenſes, and expoſes him to ridicule.

He purchaſes a manor, and is at the height of his joy. *Hunting* becomes his paſſion and his buſineſs. Every thing relating to that appears of importance, every thing elſe unintereſting: the qualities and powers of his dogs, his ſucceſs in the chace, even the difficulties which render it a moſt fatiguing exerciſe, make the continual ſubjects of his converſation, and the ſubſtance of his journal. His pheaſantry is more dear to his heart, than a province to him who has conquered it; and the ſtag of ſeven years old, which bounds about his park, is every day an object from which he derives food for vanity. He erects a little hunting-ſeat; and when the weather does not permit him to hunt, he makes himſelf amends by feaſting his eyes in looking over the whole of his hunting equipage, or in directing the repair of what is not in good order. Sometimes he purchaſes a dog; or, that he may have a new horſe, he gives one in exchange that has no longer for him the charm of novelty. Thus, he paſſes a year or two; becomes diſguſted with hunting; and finiſhes by laughing at himſelf that he could take pleaſure in ſo fatiguing an exerciſe.

Behold him, then, become more wiſe, and *building* is the amuſement of the moment. That occupation, ſays Chryſes, is aſſuredly more creditable

and uſeful. But, does he propoſe to render his houſe more convenient by his building? No: but, to build according to his own taſte, he pulls down on one ſide, and builds up on another; he erects a ſtately ſummer-houſe, and by and by a magnificent ſtable, becauſe the old one is not to his mind: another day it is a ſaloon; and, with the ſame infatuation, he muſt have the moſt beautiful pigeon-houſe of the diſtrict the day after. He forms one plan after another; purchaſes all the books on architecture which can be found, and of which he knows nothing, though he makes a great noiſe about what he has learnt; he tires his workmen to death, ſpends much of his fortune, and knows no felicity but in his buildings. But, after all, what he had planned did not anſwer to his fancy: it is executed too ſlow for his views; it is badly done; he is fretted; and he gives the thing up.

He muſt find ſome other amuſement; he ſeeks it in *company*, and he aſpires to the glory of keeping open houſe. His houſe, he ſays, muſt be the rendezvous of all that is faſhionable, and in the higheſt ſtyle; and he fills it with none but flatterers and paraſites. He buſies himſelf in taking meaſures to have a table delicately ſerved, apartments ſumptuous, and in great order, and every thing that can give ſatisfaction and pleaſure to his

gueſts; and he thinks himſelf richly paid in applauſes, and in aſſurances of friendſhip and admiration. Thus he lives a whole year, for thoſe who laviſh their praiſes, and conſume his ſubſtance; and at the end finds himſelf ſurfeited with this kind of life, which appears to him, as in fact it is, inſipid and ſlaviſh.

That brood of dinner-hunters, of baſe flatterers, which the hoſpitality of Chryſes has aſſembled around him, buzz unmercifully in his ears. The poor man appears ridiculous to them, even when he ſtrives to entertain them beſt; and when they have almoſt ruined him, theſe warm friends abandon him: A man without fortune and a fool, is of no account with them. Chagrin weighs him down; and he falls ſick: he will entertain no more, and thinks to re-eſtabliſh his health by leading a retired life: he becomes a quiet and ſolitary lover of gardens. In fine, he taſtes, in imagination, the moſt innocent pleaſures, thoſe of ſimple nature. Flowers are his only expence, and to cultivate and bring to perfection every ſpecies, is his only occupation. He has brought from afar, and at a great expence, the moſt rare bulbous roots; he ſeeks out moſt aſſiduouſly, the moſt celebrated floriſts; he knows no human creatures whoſe ſcience is comparable to that of gardeners; and wonders at himſelf that

he could ſo long neglect ſo agreeable an occupation, which amuſes him ſo delightfully a whole ſummer. Winter comes, and deſtroys a number of his fineſt flowers; his taſte for gardening vaniſhes, and he takes up that of books.

Chryſes purchaſes a fine library, he applies himſelf to reading; he would become learned: His favourite ſtudy during a month is geography; the next week heraldry appears to him the moſt invaluable ſcience; he applies to it, and tires of it very ſoon; he next paſſes to hiſtory, which he quits for poetry: already reading has no charms for him. He has his books magnificently bound, he puts them in order, he dedicates to them the principal room in his houſe, purchaſes mathematical inſtruments; in a very little time abandons his ſcientific collection, as well as his reſidence in the country: he becomes a man of the town, mingles in the faſhionable world, and laughs at the poor country folks. The court ſeems now to comprehend all that is really agreeable; the play-houſe is far ſuperior, in his opinion, to all the amuſements of a country life; the opera effaces all that hunting or building can have moſt attracting. The drawing-rooms are to him the ſchools of what is real enjoyment; he conſiders himſelf as ridiculous, when he thinks of his former taſte for books, and his lib-

rary. He ſtudies faſhions with the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs, as the ſtandard of propriety, of manners. He congratulates himſelf on his good taſte in dreſs, and values himſelf on his neat equipage, till he is forced, by the too evident diminution of his fortune, to return to the country; and there becomes at laſt ſenſible that, in his ſearch after happineſs, he has done nothing during almoſt twenty years but diſſipated his fortune, loſt his time, and miſapplied his underſtanding.

DORANTUS:

The Man who has but one Vice, and many Virtues.

Men are ſeldom ſo depraved as to give into many vices at a time, or ſo hardened in wickedneſs, that they would not wiſh to compound, in ſome ſort, by ſeveral virtues, for the favourite vice to which they abandon themſelves. Dorantus belongs to this laſt claſs. He is inclined to be a ſenſualiſt, though, with ſome reſtrictions, and he frankly confeſſes that he is a ſlave to that paſſion: but he is likewiſe juſt, ſincere, beneficent, and obliging. He

knows, and puts in practice, all the little arts which can impose on young persons, of whom he is enamoured; and betrays their innocence, though he could not behold distress without being affected by it, and seeking to relieve it. His kind-heartedness makes him beloved by those whose acquaintance does him honour, and who even know his vice. He detests brothels, and would not allow one to exist; but he does not attach any consequence to keeping one mistress, and dismissing her to take another. In bestowing on her a few pounds, he thinks himself acquitted towards her he sends away, while on the contrary he would reproach himself of injustice, were he to turn her off without some provision. He even puts himself to inconveniences to procure her an advantageous marriage, and the world praises him for the care he takes of her. Dorantus, say the fashionable gentry, has at bottom an excellent heart. Yet that does not hinder this man, whose rank and apparent decency of manners give him access to the best families, from being a dangerous enemy to female honour, by passing for a man of honour and probity. He engages to recommend me on some interesting occasion, and does me service without permitting me ever to think myself obliged; he does it, he assures me, with so much pleasure. Let one speak ill of

ſome acquaintance, or even of a perfect ſtranger, he immediately takes fire in his behalf, and teſtifies a noble indignation, that any one ſhould aim a blow at the reputation of a perſon of whom we ſhould be diſpoſed to judge favourably. Dorantus might become heir to a rich relation, if he would ſhew her more complaiſance. 'I avoid it,' ſays he, 'it would be an injuſtice to another relation, 'nearer, and more in want of it than I am.' He is indulgent to his inferiors, and his ſervants have in him the beſt of maſters, when they behave well. In ſociety he conducts himſelf with modeſty, and he would think himſelf culpable, were he to give pain to any one, or diſturb their ſatisfaction. He hates play, drinking, and extravagance. What then are we to think of Dorantus? In the language of the world he has but one vice, and many virtues; in the language of truth he has, in fact, not one virtue; but a good temper, and diſpoſitions favourable to virtue. He has too much good ſenſe to plunge into every vice, and too little to diſcern that a ſingle vice, knowingly indulged, is ſufficient to pollute the heart. His conſcience is too tender to ſin without remorſe, and that is the reaſon why he wiſhes to balance the evil by the good, and to juſtify his incontinence by the practice of the ſocial duties. He ſelects the virtues

which are moſt natural to him, and which coſt a tender heart the leaſt pain; ſuch as good nature, equity, mildneſs, and a diſpoſition to do ſervices. He cultivates thoſe virtues which are moſt agreeable in the ordinary commerce of life, which are moſt admired, and which are moſt willingly repaid. His virtues, then, are thoſe which are conſtitutional and ſeemly: and the diſlike he ſhews to certain vices, is nothing but the fruit of education, and the good examples upon which he formed himſelf in his youth. Perſons of his character are not rare, and they are not a little prejudicial to decency of manners. We are but too much inclined to the imitation of a vice which decks itſelf with ſo many virtues; and a young man, who likewiſe has good ſentiments, may eaſily allow himſelf to be impoſed on. The more unlucky it is, that men of ſuch a caſt nevertheleſs preſerve in the world a certain degree of conſideration; ſo that what belongs to them of vicious, is merely the object of pleaſantry, and there attaches only little more than a joke to extravagances completely reprehenſible. We ought no more to allow ourſelves in an indecent jeſting on the ſubject of incontinence, than on that of theft or murder, which may even be conſequences of it. Dorantus, capable of robbing women of their innocence and honour, for whom he lays his ſnares,

cannot arrogate to himſelf, in ſtrict morality, the poſſeſſion of a virtuous heart, till he ſuppreſſes the paſſion that governs it. However ſtriking may be his good actions, they have their foundation in conſtitution, education, ſelf-love, or in a bad conſcience, which wiſhes to make itſelf eaſy. Virtue is nothing but that lively and ſincere intention to obey whatever reaſon and revelation preſcribe: and can that intention be ſincere when it admits of exceptions? Is not Dorantus obliged, by the ſole motive of good example, to repreſs his vicious inclination? And does not he by his conduct weaken in the mind of others, the authority of a divine law? It is true that we cannot practiſe every virtue in the ſame degree; but there are none which we may not intend to practiſe. It is poſſible, with the beſt diſpoſitions, I own, to fall into errors, and the moſt virtuous perſons are not faultleſs; but to perſevere in them, not to repent, becauſe we cannot reſolve to amend, is no more a weakneſs, it is a depravation of heart.

REGULAR IDLENESS:

OR,

The Man who has neither Virtue nor Vice.

ERASTUS, more ſolitary than ſociable, lives but for himſelf alone, and regulates his expence in ſuch a manner as to be able to live honourably and quietly. Without family, and without domeſtic cares, he is maſter of his own time, and endeavours not to give trouble to any one. During eighteen years, one day to him is exactly like another, and enjoying good health, he is ſatisfied with his lot. At eight o'clock he wakes, takes his tea, reads the gazette, and amuſes himſelf at the window till ten. Then he attends to his affairs; that is to ſay, he enters the expence of the preceding day into his journal; examines his dreſs of laſt evening, in caſe it ſhould want repair; he decides on what he ſhall put on to-day; writes a letter, if any duty of good manners calls upon him to do it; turns over the

leaves of a new book, ſent by his bookſeller; perhaps he amuſes himſelf for half an hour with drawing, or plays on the harpſicord. He is dreſſed before mid-day, he ſits down to table, makes a good dinner, but without exceſs. He does not recollect, in thirty years, ever to have ſo far forgotten himſelf, as to have exceeded the bounds of ſobriety. After his nap, his time is not leſs regularly diſpoſed of from two o'clock to ten. He amuſes himſelf by playing an hour at billiards: the next is dedicated to the receiving and paying viſits: he reſts half an hour; he gives up a whole hour to the peruſal of ſome book of amuſement: another to a walk, when the weather permits: He ſups, and exactly at ten o'clock he goes to bed. Nothing can make him vary from this formal plan, except that on Sunday he goes to church. He poſſeſſes the reputation of leading a retired and very regular life; and his ſervant extols his regularity in ſaying his prayers every morning, and ſinging a pſalm every day. It muſt be owned that Eraſtus is a ſober and economical man; that he is neither voluptuous, nor a friend to noiſy pleaſures. He does not allow himſelf to backbite; he gives to every one the honour that belongs to him, pays his debts punctually, and lives peaceably, without diſturbing himſelf with what others do. Yet what

is Eraftus, in reveiwing the whole of his conduct? a man regular in his idleneſs. What is the grand object he has in view? a convenient and methodical indolence. He lives temperately from regard to his health; with economy, that he may not involve himſelf in difficulties; with regularity, that he may ſhun the troubleſome conſequences of diſorder. He lives for himſelf, and not for others. But is this the manner in which he performs his duty to ſociety at large, of which he makes a part? He buſies himſelf with what may pleaſe him: but is that all which reaſon dictates? The uſe which he makes of his fortune is proper; in which duty he acquits himſelf like a prudent man: Is it leſs a duty to regulate the employment of his time, and is the obligation to perform it ever to ceaſe? and how does he paſs his? In taking ſuch care of his perſon, that he may live as long as poſſible. He has no mind for any thing but the gratification of his ſenſes; and his reaſon ſerves him no farther than to diſcover the objects which may contribute to his convenient ſort of life. Becauſe he is careful to avoid the vices which bring their own puniſhment along with them, he thinks he does no ill. But all the plan of his conduct is wrong, in as much as it is repugnant to reaſon, and the views of God for man. He proves, by the arrangement of his time,

that the mind is an active principle, since from hour to hour he has assigned to himself some sort of occupation. Why cannot he comprehend, that to be a laborious and useful man, is preferable to being a busy idler? Does he flatter himself, then, that God will one day recompense the pains which he has so assiduously taken to provide for the gratification of his senses? If he could indulge in sleep as much as he would, there is every reason to think that he would doze away the greatest part of his time. However small the talents with which nature has endowed him, reason and religion impose on him, as on all mankind, the duty to render them truely useful to society. It is in this application that man's virtue and happiness consist; and if he would live in such a way as to find contentment, it is as a citizen of the world, and not as a recluse, who dreams away his life. He is permitted to provide for his comforts, but not to live merely to procure these, without interesting himself in the concerns of others; else the Creator would have assigned him a habitation in some cavern, round which he might have found collected every thing necessary to the support of his life. It is not in fact true that a life of ease is always comfortable or happy. When Eraſtus reflects, (and surely his indolence does not put to flight every serious thought!) does

his conſcience make him no reproaches on account of his life, ſo groſsly ſenſual? Does he feel no void at the bottom of his heart; no diſquiet to ſee himſelf deſpiſed by thoſe who can reproach him for the uſeleſsneſs of his life? Does he feel no ſhame at having arrived to his fortieth or fiftieth year, without finding himſelf otherwiſe than he has always been? Can he truſt in Providence, in caſe his fortune, which he dedicates entirely to his own gratification, ſhould be no longer ſufficient to ſupply his wordly wants? Could he find his conſolation in God and in his aid? Could he, when he thinks of death, dare to die with the hope of ſalvation? And if his ſoul is denied ſuch comforts, it cannot be at eaſe. That kind of eaſy life to which he is a ſlave, may well affect him agreeably for ſome years, in return for a ſubjection which will likewiſe prove his puniſhment.

The Virtuous Melancholy Man.

Our conſtitutional fault will always mingle even with our virtues, and preſent them to us under

the form which beſt accords with our particular inclinations. From thence ſpring numberleſs errors, which we admit as ſo many truths: and of all our faults none are more difficult to correct than thoſe which have their ſupport from our character and conſtitution, at the ſame time that they are conſiſtent with goodneſs of heart.

Ariſtus has a real love of virtue; his zeal is neither that of a hypocrite, nor of a bigot of presumptuous ſpiritual pride. But, being naturally melancholy and timid, his virtue bears the ſtamp of his character. He flies the innocent pleaſures of life, becauſe he believes them unlawful. And whence has he that idea? Is he not ſufficiently inſtructed to perceive that he is in an error? Yes; but his reaſon is clouded by a gloomy and hypocondriac temperament. He is naturally inclined to melancholy, and the ideas he forms of virtue, the more diſmal they are, the more they agree with his mode of thinking. You will rarely ſee him ſmile: his virtue impreſſes gravity on his countenance, and a ſmiling air would appear to him to border on levity. From the principle, "that he ſhould at all times ſet a good example to others," what falſe concluſions does not he draw? It is according to his own diſmal humour that he reaſons. He denies himſelf every mode of behaviour that is not

according to the moſt formal reſerve; he ſalutes you with the ſame gravity that he would ſay his prayers, and he aſks you how you do in the ſame tone that he ſpeaks to you of a dreadful fire. Should you indulge yourſelf in innocent raillery, if the converſation is not always on moral ſubjects, if you do not always ſpeak his language, it would be ſufficient to make him heave the deepeſt ſighs. In the view of ſetting a good example, he never fails to diſclaim againſt the great relaxation of manners; and, on every occaſion, utters the fineſt maxims without order or method. His deſire of being uſeful, is ſo out of all bounds, that he recounts the news of the day with the ſolemn tones of a preacher; and even at table he never ſuſpects that his diſcourſe is ill-timed, believing that it ſhould appear to others only as it ſeems to himſelf. Should a party at play be propoſed which he cannot refuſe, he plays with the ſame gravity of countenance which he wears when he viſits a ſick friend. He thinks people ſhould be uniform in their conduct, that is to ſay, according to his opinion, they ſhould be auſterely ſerious. Should you take a walk with him, and be inclined to enjoy the cheerful landſcape; that is a pleaſure his heart cannot feel, but he will make himſelf amends by deſcanting on the wonders of nature: it is more eaſy for him to talk

of it, than to enjoy it. The moſt delightful dell fixes his attention leſs than ſome ſteep rock, which, bending at the ſummit, forms a gloomy cavern, furniſhes him with matter for melancholy reflections. Without being a miſer, he ſcruples to allow himſelf to ſpend the ſmalleſt ſum to carry him into the country, or to procure him the pleaſure of a concert: muſic, he ſays, is a voluptuous gratification of the ſenſes. It would be well for him that he had ſomething capable of moving him, and affecting him agreeably; but becauſe muſic diſturbs his gloomy ideas, he conſiders it as dangerous, and pities thoſe for whom it has charms. As he enjoys privacy, all numerous companies terrify him; he conſiders all great aſſemblies as ſchools of worldly vanity; and exhorts his acquaintances to lead a retired life, that is to ſay, a life of diſmal ſolitude. Ariſtus is at bottom inclined to be uſeful, but one would ſay that he was not, or at leaſt that it coſt him much to be ſo; ſince he finds it ſo difficult to look cheerful when the buſineſs is to oblige. Whatever attachment he may have for the individuals of his family, and whatever intereſt he may take in it, he is ſo ungracious that he loſes almoſt all the merit of his efforts, or renders himſelf ridiculous. He has two ſons, one of which is lively and giddy, the other cold and phlegmatic. He would have

the eldeſt, at twelve years old, take the manners of a ſteady man, and vexes himſelf that he cannot make him aſſume the ſerious air which he himſelf has contracted. He takes pains to render the ſecond completely phlegmatic, and applauds himſelf in perceiving every day in him more and more inſenſibility: ſo that he hopes every thing from him, while he augurs nothing good of the eldeſt; and, with all the feelings of a tender father, he will ſpoil both by a miſerable education. Ariſtus is compaſſionate, and capable of taking as great an intereſt in the misfortunes of others, as he takes little in their joys. He takes care of a number of ſick people, for whom, without wiſhing to appear in it, he procures medicines and cordials, while it would be a fruitleſs attempt for his relations to try to perſuade him to make a little party of pleaſure for them, and give them a ſupper in a garden he has without the town. "It is not that I mind the ex-"pence," ſays he, "but can I not employ my time "much better?" Believe me, Ariſtus, were you to make it a duty to procure them that recreation, to treat them kindly, and conciliate their eſteem, they would better reliſh your good leſſons, when you have cheered them by your affability: that would be employing your time better than you imagine. One of his nieces marries a gentleman,

ſhut up on one of his eſtates, where he ſees nobody: he gives her a rich dowry, and felicitates her on the happy ſolitude in which ſhe is going to live. He gives a much ſmaller portion to a ſiſter not leſs deſerving than her: but ſhe has eſpouſed a brave officer, and he ſays to her, with tears in his eyes, that he pities the choice ſhe has made. Of two orphans whom he has brought up, the one has made choice of the buſiness of a miner, and Ariſtus commends it as an uſeful employment: "I will ſupply you with all you want for an object ſo praiſeworthy. God has not placed the metals in the bowels of the earth, but that men by their induſtry might draw them forth and employ them advantageouſly." Let people ſpeak to him of the other orphan's admirable taſte for painting, it is enough to make him cease to intereſt himſelf on his account, becauſe he thinks that the art has produced dangerous works; and that he himſelf pays no attention but to what is uſeful. "I don't condemn painting, ſculpture, and muſic," ſays he, "but I refuſe to apply my money for others to be inſtructed in them, and I have very good reaſons for it."

How amiable a man, how uſeful to ſociety might Ariſtus be, did he not darken his virtues by his gloomy manners; did he not confound the ſug-

geſtions of his melancholy with thoſe preſcribed by duty; and would he comprehend that it belongs to virtue to reform the diſpoſition, and not to adopt its defects! perhaps he might confeſs himſelf wrong and amend, if he would reflect on the miſchief which from thence reſults to ſociety. All his goodness of heart, all his noble views, do not prevent his virtue from being ſuſpected, and often deſpiſed. He deprives himſelf of numberleſs occaſions of doing good, by throwing people at a diſtance by his grumbling auſterity, or by withdrawing from them to give himſelf up to privacy. He often becomes cruel and unjuſt, when he means to be upright; and renders himſelf odious and troubleſome, by an ill-timed zeal. Can he believe that we are pious in proportion as we deny to ourſelves and others thoſe innocent pleaſures which the Creator has allotted us? Can he think that it is not allowed to us to feel whatever is pleaſant in our condition, and can he doubt if God does not always intend our happineſs and that of all his creatures? Ought he to confound together as he does, a timid diſpoſition and a ſuſpicious temper, with a prudent circumſpection and a wiſe vigilance? Moſt certainly men would be in many reſpects better, if they were ſo many Ariſtuſes; but it is no leſs true that they would form but a diſ-

agreeable and fretful ſociety, where ſuperſtition and continual complainings would ſoon take place among them. Our virtue ſhould as little degenerate into bad humour, as into lightneſs and frivolity.

A YOUNG MAN

Viewed on the good and bad ſide.

The young man has all the qualities requiſite for the foundation of his happineſs, and to anſwer the expectations of ſociety. Internally and externally all is favourably diſpoſed, maturing and perfecting his talents, ſo as to render him one day as happy in himſelf as he is uſeful to his fellow-citizens; as beneficent towards mankind, as he is ſure of a return of gratitude and kindneſs. Let us conſider the whole of theſe good qualities together, whether we take the good ſeparated from all that is amiſs in them, or the bad as far as they can be rectified by education, and directed to the ſide of virtue.

The young man is naturally and ordinarily bold and inconſtant in his deſires and purſuits. Giddineſs, a reſtleſs ardour for glory, a natural tendency to imitate every one, without giving himſelf time to reflect, a violent diſpoſition to the pleaſures of ſenſe, guide him, take poſſeſſion of his heart, and very eaſily too of his reaſon, which becomes an accomplice in all his extravagancies. He is credulous, eaſy to be won, and no leſs eaſily offended, and prompt to vengeance. Much diſpoſed to expence, he diſdains economy. Feeling his powers increaſe every day, he raſhly puts them to trials, without ſolicitude for his health, and ſeldom even for his life. He rejects for the moſt part all inſpection into his conduct, he is not inclined to take advice but from himſelf, and thence the numberleſs extravagancies into which he plunges. Regret for his faults ſeems to penetrate him readily; but at bottom it is the reproach and the ſhame which afflict him rather than the fault itſelf which has brought them upon him. Such is the young man when viewed on the bad ſide, and, nevertheleſs, thoſe very faults which diſfigure, ought and may concur in making him the worthy man, capable of becoming uſeful to himſelf and to others.

The boldneſs, the impetuoſity of the young man, will ſerve as a foundation to that courage and ap-

plication in buſineſs, which he will exhibit in more advanced life: his fickleneſs and giddineſs once ſettled, he will become a man of a docile and ſedate mind. How ſlowly would his memory, his imagination, his underſtanding, ſeize the objects and information neceſſary in common life, were he not unſettled in his likings, and did he not paſs rapidly from one wiſh to another? Every ſtep he took towards each ſpecies of folly would be one advance towards vice, if he did not become quickly diſguſted with that by which he has allowed himſelf to be ſo fooliſhly ſeduced. All impetuous and enterpriſing as is the young man, nature, to make up for his want of experience and information, has endowed him with a noble ſentiment of modeſty, which ſerves him as a monitor and guide, when he does not ſtifle its voice. However independent he deſires to be, he finds himſelf bound to his family by ties which he can in no ſort break, and which chain him, whether he will or not. Love and gratitude towards his parents and benefactors often are to him in place of reaſon. Though eager in the purſuit of his wiſhes, he is not inſenſible to the prayers of a tender mother. The grave reprimand of a father keeps him in order, and the well directed advice of a friend, often proves a leſſon which ſinks deep into his heart.

The young man, naturally credulous, plunges into many errors; but that very diſpoſition renders him more ſuſceptible of the impreſſions of truth and virtue, particularly from thoſe who know how to conciliate his attachment and eſteem. In that reſpect, his credulity, directed by men of enlightened reaſon, turns to his advantage: their leſſons, ſtrengthened by their experience, added to his having often felt how eaſily he has allowed himſelf to be impoſed upon, will inſenſibly render him circumſpect. If, under ſome circumſtances, he has intentionally diſguiſed his faults, he is for the moſt part ingenuous enough to avow them; and he loves talking too well, not to ſpeak ſometimes what does him no honour. Thus he has an opportunity to blame himſelf, and, from his manner of doing it, enables others to judge what he ought to be, and what we may promiſe ourſelves he will one day become.

The wiſh to be approved and admired occupies the young man, and he forms high notions of himſelf, and of what he ſuppoſes himſelf able to undertake and to perform. This diſpoſition, rectified and guided by wiſdom, may render him ardent for action, and animate him to do well: but may not he alſo place his glory in things which he ought rather to deſpiſe and deteſt? Yes; but that is

moſt frequently from a want of inſtruction or of good examples. However defective may have been his education, he wants ſometimes but a ſingle model of virtue to direct his deſire of fame wholly to the ſide of behaviour truly good, and to the moſt laudable objects. One failure becomes to him, as often as he recollects his bad ſucceſs, a leſſon to direct his ambition, and makes him more circumſpect in purſuit of that which he makes it his pride to obtain. If he purſue a vicious object, his conſcience condemns it, and excites him to return to the path of virtue; he ſpeaks to his heart not yet hardened, as loudly as his irregular inclination will permit him. His love of fame, and the eagerneſs with which he gives himſelf up to his enterpriſes, would very ſoon cool without theſe lofty ideas which he has formed of himſelf, and of the part which he will one day act in the world. He undoubtedly ſometimes deceives himſelf, but his miſtake may turn to his advantage if he makes a proper uſe of it. There are none of his qualities, even his preſumption, which might not, if he pleaſed, be converted into modeſty and humility, which are qualities ſo excellent, and ſo indiſpenſible in ſociety. His enterpriſing ambition urges him to form in himſelf the qualities moſt proper, and moſt favourable to his views. He applies to learn ſuch

things as may do him moſt credit; he values himſelf on his knowledge and merit; he is full of ardour, and propoſes new plans, always having in view ſomething to acquire and to undertake; ever ſome fault to correct, ever ſome noble example to imitate and ſurpaſs. His acquirements thus gradually increaſing, experience, time, and mortifications, having taught him how ſmall his merit, how imperfect his virtue, his pride is inſenſibly converted into humility. Thus the caterpillar, diſengaged from its ugly covering, which it has burſt in its growth, becomes a butterfly as agreeable to the ſight, as it was diſguſting in its firſt form.

The young man is raſh, and that natural raſhneſs may, by management, be changed into intrepid courage in the midſt of dangers; a diſpoſition which will one day juſtify the high expectations formed of him by his family and his country. The blood which boils in his veins renders him impetuous and eager; but from thence comes too that vivacity with which he gives himſelf up to active purſuits, which keeps his muſcles in action, ſtrengthens them, and inures his body to fatigue, to active employment, and to many inconveniences of life. Without that impetuoſity, the redundant humours would load his conſtitution and hurt his health, or

render him leſs diſpoſed to all that activity which he is called upon to exert.

The paſſions, thoſe which have their ſeat in his boiling blood, ſuch as anger and luſt, ſeem to form the moſt diſguſting and dangerous parts of his character. To what guſts of paſſion is he not liable in his anger! but thanks to his natural inconſtancy, the fire is ſoon extinguiſhed. His heart is incapable of irreconcilable enmities, ſuch as thoſe of ſome people advanced in years. He readily pardons the miſchief which people have done him, and frankly teſtifies the regret of having cauſed diſſatisfaction to others, provided the repreſentation is made with mildneſs, or in a tone of ſeriouſneſs. His anger appeaſed, he is but the more circumſpect not to expoſe himſelf to new injuries; and when reaſon once makes itſelf heard and liſtened to, all his vivacity is but an immediate and ſtrong averſion to whatever can unduly trouble his own repoſe, or that of others.

The inclination which attaches him to the other ſex, that inclination ſo delightful, ſo indiſpenſable for the preſervation of the human race, would prove the moſt dangerous enemy to his life and happineſs, if, fortunately, its manifeſtation were not delayed to an age when the young man is in a ſtate to be guided by reaſon and religion: a ſentiment

of baſhfulneſs ſerves too as a defence againſt that inclination. Animated by the love of praiſe, and of general approbation; intimidated by the fear of diſhonour; encouraged by a wiſe preceptor, who knows how to gain his affection; docile, by motives of love and of fear, to the inſtructions of parents and relations; having a taſte for occupations which do not permit him to remain idle; finding himſelf engaged likewiſe in a ſeries of pleaſures which friendſhip, the ſenſes, or the imagination, procure him; guarded by temperance, and by that ſentiment of a yet tender conſcience, which marks, in a forcible manner, the obligation of holding nothing more ſacred than the commands of his Creator; theſe are ſo many diſpoſitions favourable towards ſubduing his inclination to love, that inclination which, regulated by virtue, is beneficial to health, to life, and to poſterity, when Hymen ſhall unite him to the object of his affections: That ſame affection which, directed by virtue, renders him attentive to buſineſs, and to every thing that can make him more fit to be beloved, and the hope of taſting one day in the ſociety of an amiable companion all the ſweets of life and of unalterable friendſhip, incites him to acquire very many of the qualities which are previouſly neceſſary to his becoming an happy man.

His diſregard of money, from which might proceed prodigality, defends him from an enemy very dangerous to the virtues of his heart, I mean *base interest*, which might otherwiſe tyrannize over him in more advanced life. With this contempt of money, beneficence and generoſity will more readily ſpring up in his heart, which produce in their turn ſo many of the ſocial virtues.

His decided inclination to imitation, though one ſource of many extravagances and dangerous temptations, may render him an uſeful citizen of the world, when prudence guides it. Inacceſſible to care, his mind preſerves that ſtrictneſs which enables him to give himſelf up entirely to the occupation he has choſen; and his eagerneſs to acquire new information, though it moſt inclines to objects of ſenſe and memory, procures for him, however, a fund which greatly enriches his judgement. I would compare him to a tree, which in ſpring puſhes out vigorous branches, an abundance of leaves, of buds, and of flowers. None of theſe could unfold without the others; and all together could not produce fruit, were not the tree in a condition to bear it. That ardour, ſo alive to novelty, does not allow a a young man to remain idle; and though governed by his ſenſes, no one finds more eaſily wherewith to ſatisfy his hunger, and that at leſs expence,

without complaining of the ſcantineſs of his meal. Unacquainted with all thoſe conveniences which old age requires and ſeeks after, he ſubmits patiently to a hard mode of living, provided it accords with the wiſh of his heart, and with what his duty impoſes.

The heart of a young man is undoubtedly liable to dangerous paſſions, but when theſe are well managed and regulated, they conſpire to render him happier. Avarice, envy, cunning, fraud, inſolence, and cruelty, are rarely the vices of youth. On the contrary, the young man is happy enough, becauſe ſociability, a deſire a pleaſe, to gain friends, an inclination to imitate others, courage, the love of glory, compaſſion, a deſire to be ſerviceable, become as ſo many ſprings whioh enrich his heart, and enable him to yield, in abundance, fruits calculated to benefit ſociety, and to encreaſe his own particular happineſs. He has a number of faults, but either his education, or his own peculiar endeavours, may greatly amend them, and render him every day more wiſe, more circumſpect, more moderate, and more virtuous. When he early imbibes juſt ideas of religion, he is ſo much the more capable of guarding againſt all perſeverance in any vice which may come to his knowledge.

'Diſcipline thy heart, then, young man, in ear-
'ly years.' Acquire knowledge, but apply thy-
ſelf yet more to acquire virtue. Reflect that peace
of mind is the greateſt of bleſſings, and that your
happineſs depends wholly on yourſelf.

The Insidious Slanderer.

MALIGNUS affects to eſteem talents and merit, wherever he finds them, and to be more deſirous to conceal the faults of others than to diſcloſe them. In fact, he cannot bear merit in others, and he would perceive none of their virtues, if his jealouſy and pride did not awaken his attention. He feels ſtrongly a deſire to be better than ſuch a one and ſuch a one whom he envies; but his heart is too depraved to think of ſurpaſſing them in real excellencies; and he aims but to lower them, by expoſing their failings, true or imaginary, and in making a merit of it for himſelf. However baſe that may be, Malignus ſacrifices to it all his ſagacity, all his learning; and it is that which procures

him in the world the title of a man of penetration, of an enlightened cenſor and moraliſt.

It is commonly by praiſing that he tries to diſguiſe his calumnies. He ſhuns all the debaſing epithets, and in his cenſures chuſes only the mildeſt terms; but it is not language alone that ſuffices to ſhew his ſentiments; the tone with which he ſpeaks, ſays yet much more. The air which he aſſumes, the ſtudied look, the eyes caſt on the ground, the wrinkled brow, a ſignificant geſture, ſlanders yet more than his words.

We praiſe the underſtanding of Honeſtus, and no perſon praiſes him in higher terms than Malignus. He would make you believe that he knows his merit, and that he poſſeſſes that rare quality, of eſteeming and admiring the pre-eminence of others without envy. 'I owe much,' ſays he, 'to him and to his acquirements: I know him well, and am but too ſenſibly affected when the world attacks that worthy man, reſpecting the ſentiments of the heart.' He is ſilent. The ſerious and diſcontented look he puts on, confirms his affected ſorrows; and a certain movement of the head, which ſeems to give aſſent, renders the ſuſpicion yet more probable to the whole of the company. That is enough for Malignus; he continues to cry up the

wit, the underſtanding, the politeneſs of Honeſtus, and makes no farther mention of his good heart.

Harken to him in another company, where the talk is of Amicus. 'That is a friendly man,' he will tell you, 'a man of probity, I know him to be ſo. If he does not diſtinguiſh himſelf ſo much by his wit, probity, after all, is a more commendable title; and if, as people pretend, he is not equal to his buſineſs, the fault cannot be imputed to his heart.' I own that the bear in the fable, who breaks the head of the man his friend, in meaning to do him a ſervice, is a dangerous friend; but cordiality does not ceaſe to be an eſtimable virtue. 'The good Amicus!' exclaims he with a ſorrowful look, and an equivocal tone of voice. Some one aſks him what is, properly ſpeaking, the fault of Amicus? He ſtares at the perſon who aſked the queſtion, ſeems not to have underſtood him, and anſwers the queſtion by the moſt malicious ſilence. Malignus has no doubt but they will all imagine by it, that he knows more than he allows himſelf to ſpeak.

'Certainly,' ſaid he, (on an occaſion when one of the company highly praiſed a preacher), 'he delivers himſelf with the greateſt eloquence, and he truly merits the diſtinguiſhed ſituation he holds in the church. He is almoſt a Boſſuet, a ſecond

Saurin.' After a ſhort compariſon between Saurin and the clergyman of whom they are ſpeaking, and of whoſe eloquence he himſelf gives inſtances, he interrupts himſelf by a *but*, and heſitates. Why do you heſitate Malignus? Nothing. 'Have not ſuch men as Boſſuet and Saurin been taxed with overbearance and avarice? For is there, in reality, any great man whom we can perſuade ourſelves to believe to be without fault.'

Another day Malignus, in a large company where ſome one ſpeaks diſadvantageouſly of the virtue of a married lady: he is afraid to *ſpeak* out: but his ſignificant *look* ſays more than is neceſſary to confirm every ſuſpicion. He ſlily introduces ſome ſententious phraſe, which ſerves as a cover to the ſlanders which he dares not ſpeak plainly. Thus, you will hear him ſay on all occaſions: "Are we always to credit the evil which we hear "ſpoken of others? Humanity demands that we "ſhould preſume nothing but good of them, till "cruel neceſſity obliges us to think otherwiſe. It "is much eaſier to diſcern the faults than the vir-"tues of another. Every one has his defects, "and he is the moſt perfect who has the feweſt. "Without an obligation to conceal and bear with "the faults of mankind, what would become of in-"dulgence and humanity! Evil ſpeaking magni-

" fies the objects, even without intending it; let " us always abate one half." Under ſhelter of ſuch ſentences as theſe, he lances his ſhafts, and wounds without diſcovering or expoſing himſelf.

Cleanthes, that author ſo generally eſteemed, and juſtly too, enjoys, in ſpite of Malignus, a reputation againſt which he can allege nothing. " That " writer," ſays he, " ſo reliſhed by the public, is al- " ſo my favourite author; and who but muſt take " a pleaſure in reading him! He writes to the " underſtanding, to the imagination, and to the " heart, and that with a preciſion and application " that, if we may believe ſome people, had almoſt " ruined his health. It is an injuſtice not to have " ſecured to a man of ſuch merit an honourable in- " come. Great geniuſes ought not to be reduced " to the neceſſity of writing for bread, or of ſacri- " ficing health to the care of providing a ſubſiſt- " ence. What a ſhame for the age in which we " live!" By that public-ſpirited complaint he makes a famiſhed ſcribler of his favourite author, and his works, ſo famed, no other than the productions of an intereſted ſoul, who labours merely for money.

Our inſidious ſlanderer is too expert at his buſineſs, not to underſtand all its fineſſes. The ter-

rible *but* does not always immediately follow the preſent inſtant commendation. Malignus prepares to-day and to-morrow, the batteries intended, by exaggerated praiſes, to ruin the reputation of Montanus. The effect muſt not follow till he has eſtabliſhed his credit as a ſincere and true ſpoken man, ſo that it may be neceſſary to employ weeks and even months. He knows that Montanus ſeeks in marriage a perſon of much merit, and hitherto he has made him his hero. To-day his converſation rolls on the perſon with whom Montanus is ſmitten, and Malignus perceives with diſpleaſure that he is likely to gain her. He draws from his pocket ſome verſes which Montanus compoſed long ago, and reads them without mentioning the ſubject or the occaſion. They applaud them: "But, "Malignus, does that gallant little poem apply well "to Doris whom Montanus courts? it does not ap- "pear to be ſuitable to her."—"Oh!" replies he, ſmiling, "cannot one cajole more than one pretty "woman at a time. It is a privilege of poets. Aſk "Montanus to whom theſe verſes are addreſſed. "It is enough if they are pretty. The other queſ- "tions it is not for us to aſk: they ſhould only be "decided in the court of love." With the aſſiſtance of this inſipid joke, Malignus gains his point. People tax Montanus with levity and art. Our gen-

tleman no ſooner perceives that he has ſucceeded, than he ſeals the miſchievous impreſſions he has excited, by adding: "I beg you, however, ladies, "not to betray me." He often leads the converſation to people whoſe faults are partly known, and he is ſilent till others have taken upon them the office of ſlandering. He then makes himſelf underſtood by his ſmile, by his manner of flouriſhing with his cane, which he now and then puts to his mouth, where he holds it with a penſive air, with an occaſional, O! how! what! He conveys more miſchief by his ſilence, than others by their words, and from that manner he paſſes with many people for a juſt and diſcerning man,—he, who at bottom is a mere envious calumniator, a being whom the ſon of Sirach ranks with ſcoundrels, and even amongſt the chief of them.

FALSE SHAME:

OR,

True Decency sacrificed to Imaginary Delicacy.

ERASTUS, ambitious youth! is desirous to acquire the manners of the great world, and to procure himself friends and protectors. His good countenance recommends him: his lively spirit, and a certain air of modesty, joined to the honourable rank his family holds, give him access into the most creditable houses. The slightest offence which ignorance or want of thinking makes him commit against decorum, puts him to the blush. But, too much a slave to the approbation of others, and too weak to be above attending to what might displease, he often mistakes true honour, and sacrifices it to false shame. A friend to truth, he never is guilty of a deliberate falsehood; yet, in recounting a story, he is apt to omit or change circumstances; he exaggerates or diminish-

es according as he imagines it will embelliſh that which he relates: and he becomes unfaithful, from the ſtrong deſire he has to ſay uncommon things, and to paſs for an agreeable teller of a ſtory. He often reproaches himſelf apart for this, without at all changing the manner which he has before aſſumed in company, if the converſation in the leaſt animates him. He is too full of ſentiments of piety to diſdain an act of thankſgiving before and after his meals; but he ſees that many people diſpenſe with it, and, though with reluctance, he thinks himſelf called upon to imitate them, from the fear of making them judge unfairly of his devotion. "People will take me for a ſingular man," ſays he, "for a hypocrite," and of courſe he affects to be irreligious. All exceſs, and particularly in drinking, is diſagreeable to him; but the principal perſon of the company challenges him to pledge him, and makes him drink many toaſts. To refuſe a man of that conſideration would be impolite; and to ſhew that he underſtands good breeding, he puſhes his complaiſance ſo far as to intoxicate himſelf, and loſe his reaſon; he endangers his own health, or expoſes himſelf to fall into a vice approaching the neareſt to drunkenneſs. Some one of the company permits himſelf to utter a filthy equivoke, with which Eraſtus is ſhocked:

but he conſtrains himſelf to laugh with the reſt, leſt ſome impudent fellow ſhould conſider him as too ignorant to underſtand it. He has performed badly ſome part of a dance. How great his confuſion! but in the next movement he utters an impertinent witticiſm to a lady, by which he makes them forget his miſtake, and he recovers his aſſurance. He is guilty of ſome inadvertency at play, he is aſhamed, he thinks to repair it by an oath, and his ſhame vaniſhes. Eraſtus dreads to be thought a lover of contradiction, which he knows to be an odious character in ſociety, ſo that ſhould any one cruelly ſet upon Amicus, and many things be falſely imputed to him, Eraſtus dares not take his part, however much he may wiſh it. Clelia, who has moſt maligned his friend, looks ſtedfaſtly at him, and he inſtantly applauds in a manner that belies his heart. She appeals to his teſtimony. "You have heard him as well as I, Sir."—"Cer-"tainly, madam," replies he, from a falſe ſhame which thus renders him a ſlanderer. Without being foppiſh, the dread of being leſs richly dreſſed than others, makes him condeſcend to be gawdy in his dreſs, and by and by he runs into extravagance. What then hinders Eraſtus from freeing himſelf from that ill-placed baſhfulneſs ſo prejudicial to virtue? Let him be but a little honeſt

and he will readily own that he picques himſelf leſs on virtuous manners than on good breeding. That is the ſource of all the defects of his character, and that is what above all things he ought to amend. He is only directed in his conduct by public opinion: and yet, does he not know that the real merit or turpitude of an action does not depend on what the multitude thinks of it? His ingenious equivoke, his oath which was ſo ſucceſsful, his complaiſance in drinking till his reaſon was gone, would they be more worthy approbation, even ſhould all the world applaud them? Which is moſt honourable, to conform to uſages which impoſe on the multitude, or to the laws of conſcience, adopted by a few of the truly wiſe? But you ſay, Eraſtus, "I muſt then conſent to give up "the approbation of thoſe who give the *ton* in the "world, and whoſe ſuffrage can give me moſt con-"ſequence." Why not? You could not but gain and do yourſelf honour by it, ſince the praiſes laviſhed on ſuch miſerable follies, even from a monarch, a queen, a prince, a hero, or a ſcholar, would not be leſs diſgraceful to him that beſtows, than to him who receives them. Will you have a proof, Eraſtus? Your falſe ſhame has made you act to-day againſt the ſuggeſtions of conſcience and your own conviction: a whole aſſembly have

rewarded you by teſtimonies of conſideration. Very well! Reflect on theſe when you are on the point of going to ſleep: figure yourſelf to be on your death-bed; ſince it is poſſible you may die that very night. Compare the reproaches of your conſcience with the applauſes with which you were honoured by the company you have juſt left. That judge within, does he ceaſe to accuſe you, to condemn you, even by what you can ſay for yourſelf? "They reliſhed my converſation, they have "applauded me, they have enjoyed my pleaſant-"ry." Suppoſe a being of a ſuperior order appears before you, and you ſhould aſk him what judgment he has formed of your ſituation: you will probably hear him anſwer: "Unfortunate "Eraſtus, whom a falſe glory has deceived? Thou "art aſhamed not to be approved; and thou ra-"ther chooſeſt to be out of humour with yourſelf! "Thou ſeekeſt mortal glory, and diſdaineſt that "which comeſt from the ſupreme Ruler of the "univerſe! Thou ſmothereſt the inward ſenſe of "what is criminal, and that is what conſtitutes "thy ſhame. Thou governeſt thyſelf by what "ſome wretched fools think of thy conduct, and "thou reſpecteſt not the commands of divine wiſ-"dom. Canſt thou find any glory in theſe things? "Ambitious young man, thy heart has only che-

" riſhed miſplaced and abject ſentiments, and if " thou doſt not take pains to think more ſenſibly, " thy heart will ſoon be completely corrupted. " Seek to obtain the approbation of reaſonable " people, but never in a way repugnant to that " which duty points out to thee, ſince the real de- " corums of ſociety can never be in contradiction " to the laws of reaſon and religion. That great " man, of whoſe approbation thou art this day ſo " ambitious, will ſoon be as thou wilt be, crumbled " into a little duſt. Reſpect that rank which he " holds from Providence, but pay no regard to his " errors and his vices; and know, that the appro- " bation of all that is moſt diſtinguiſhed on earth, " when obtained by the violation of any duty, is " in heaven the greateſt diſgrace."

PROUD HUMILITY.

THERE is no fault which ſhocks us more in other people than pride; and yet there is nothing that we give more eaſily into, or more willingly hide

from ourſelves: ſo that we hardly admire any virtue ſo much in perſons of merit as humility; of which perhaps the practice would coſt us more than that of any other duty. It is that which makes thoſe who have any knowledge of the world reſtrain themſelves, in whatever might diſcloſe a pride which nobody can bear, while they cheriſh it in ſecret, and even unknown to themſelves; and thence it comes that they clothe themſelves with the external ſigns of humility, without adopting its ſpirit. Beſides, we cannot diſſemble to ourſelves, that for creatures as imperfect as we are, humility is no virtue of ſupererogation, but indiſpenſable; that which operates againſt humility is what lowers us the moſt. We cannot examine ourſelves without being obliged to own, that in beings ſo liable to error, pride is altogether miſplaced, and even monſtrous; but it is ſelf-flattery which pleads in its favour, and makes us ſo unwilling to baniſh it from our heart, and ſo ready to imagine that we have expelled it. Antenor is a man of parts, who cannot bear pride, and from thence believes himſelf to be humble. Though a man of a good family, he derives no vanity from it: "It is a folly," he ſays, "to be proud of an advantage which we did not procure to ourſelves. "That the nobility of our anceſtors may be ho-

"nourable to us, we muſt render ourſelves worthy "of it by our own proper merit." Though Antenor ſhews in all his behaviour condeſcenſion and regard to his inferiors, modeſty and conſideration to his ſuperiors, yet he has a lurking pride, in that he ſhews it ſo little. But if we do not remark or do not extol his condeſcenſion, he aſſumes an air of diſcontent and coldneſs; but if you admire his affability, the more you will find him prepoſſeſſing and full of complaiſance. His aim is merely to make himſelf remarked. "Can there be a "more ridiculous merit," ſays he, "than that "which we affect to derive from our dreſs?— "not being obliged to live at court, in mine the "chief object ſhould be neatneſs." He dreſſes himſelf therefore moſt citizen-like, and much below what his fortune might allow; and he ſhews the ſame attentions to a man of merit in the plaineſt dreſs, as to him who is the moſt richly attired. Nor is he leſs flattered by having his modeſty extolled in what concerns his outward appearance; and you rarely ſee him in any houſe, where he has been taxed with hidden pride from the affectation of dreſſing himſelf below what his means can afford. He makes little account of titles, and he, with no leſs ſincerity, rejects the praiſe of deep ſtudy: he is not ſo nice when praiſe

is delicately and well managed; of which he is as greedy at the bottom of his heart, as he is ready to disclaim the qualities which really belong to him, to repress the flattery which is extravagant and gross, and to shew himself indignant, if any one salutes him with an air too humble and cringing. If you testify your admiration in an ingenuous and indirect manner, he will be delighted with it, and whatever pains he may take to conceal the secret pleasure he feels, he will make it sufficiently evident by the acknowledgment which he testifies to you for the obliging things you have said to him, or by the tone of good will with which he begs you to spare him. It is even a great step towards gaining his esteem, when any one shews him a personal attention and deference. "That man who "loads me with compliments, does not please me," says he, "for his manner and his countenance give "no signs of good sense." Thus the humility of Antenor is nothing but the rejection of the applause of fools and flatterers by profession. Yet he desires to be admired; what humility! Outward marks of respect displease him, as far as they are ambiguous and fatiguing. They must be such as he can depend upon, and by which his delicacy is not wounded; can we blame him? But is it not allowable to say, that in his mind he at-

taches too much value to ſuch marks of eſteem; that he makes them the grand object of his actions, ſo much as to do nothing but with a view to make ſure of them, and even to conceive a diſlike for whoever refuſes them; or to avoid all intercourſe with a man of probity and merit, merely becauſe he does not praiſe him as much as he likes? The modeſty and humility of Antenor, then, is at bottom mere pride, but a pride ſubtle and delicate. He is ſenſible that he has defects, he will confeſs it; but it is that he may applaud himſelf in private, that he be held better than others, and to engage you to think and ſpeak yet more favourably of him. Can we believe that this is doing him injuſtice? No; for why ſhould he ſpeak ſo often of his defects, while he takes ſo much pains that no one may obſerve them? In his own home he gives himſelf up to the moſt violent fits of paſſion, which his domeſtics feel on committing the ſlighteſt fault: if he has company, he is a man that keeps his temper, whatever his ſervants may do to provoke him. With what compoſure of mind he bears to be criticiſed! Whether you may find fault with his dreſs, his apartments, or the arrangement of his gardens, he liſtens to you with a ſmile of complacency, applauds your remarks when they are well founded, without ever profiting by them,

and but very ſeldom correcting any thing in conſequence of your obſervations. But let you praiſe his buildings, his gardens, as much as you pleaſe, if you criticiſe his library, you make him ſerious and gloomy. Admire, on the contrary, the number, the neatneſs, and, above all, the choice of his books, Antenor is of all ſcholars the moſt gracious. You will perceive him penſive and depreſſed, if you do not appear quite charmed with the education he gives to his children. His wife is neither handſome, nor of agreeable converſation: ſhe is rather the contrary. Nevertheleſs he is ſeldom ſeen without her, and whenever they are met together, he is the moſt attached, the moſt complaiſant of huſbands. She adores him, and he allows her to have many defects, without in the leaſt diminiſhing his regard for her. "It is but juſt," ſays he, "that we ſhould bear with thoſe from whom "we expect indulgence ourſelves: I love my wife "much more for her virtue than her underſtanding." I believe you, Antenor, but perhaps you love her moſt becauſe ſhe idolizes you before all the world, and, on all occaſions, extols your noble manner of thinking and acting, with regard to her. With much learning, Antenor is as far from making a diſplay of it, as of his riches. You will hear him ſay, that we ought never to aſſume vanity from

what we know; never make others feel the ſuperiority of our learning; and that, far from humbling them in company, by expoſing their weakneſs, rather ſhould aſſiſt them to think and expreſs themſelves with more propriety. When called upon to ſpeak his own ſentiments, he delivers them with all poſſible modeſty and circumſpection. Yet obſerve how he takes fire at the leaſt contradiction! Why cannot he behold the change which ſhews itſelf in his features and expreſſion of countenance: with what an imperious tone he ſpeaks, with what quickneſs; and with what an air he pronounces theſe common phraſes, *or I am much mistaken; without doubt I may be in an error, but —I am not inclined to be positive.* Another time if you diſpute the point, he ſtops ſhort, makes a long ſullen pauſe, and he refutes you, by not deigning to reply to you. Otherwiſe he is not a man to retain the remembrance of any criticiſm or cenſure. Shew him on any occaſion that you meant no reflection on his knowledge, he will ſeek you out, and he will conquer the uneaſy ſenſation which your offenſive doubt had occaſioned. It is quite another thing if you do not appear perſuaded of his modeſty and humility. "Never," ſays he, "will I ſuffer any one to impeach the ſentiments of "my heart. I hate pride in others, ſhall I allow it

" in myſelf? To ſay that a man has merit, and " that he is vain of it, is to rob him of it entirely." Antenor, I fear much, that is in fact the merit you want, and which, if you take ſo much pains to perſuade yourſelf and others that you have attained, it is only becauſe humility is as amiable as pride is odious, and that an inordinate love of praiſe is what governs you. It may be honeſtly allowed you to be ſenſible in what you are ſuperior to others, to impel you to ſurpaſs them in merit, to entitle yourſelf to their eſteem, and to receive their aſſent to it; all that is very compatible with humility.

But know, too, that humility has its ſeat in the heart; that it does not conſiſt in mere external appearances; and whether it is for your learning or good qualities, or for your exterior talents and riches, that you plume yours, it is ſtill pride at bottom. While you do not conſider all your advantages as gifts of God gratuitouſly beſtowed, and that you do not acknowledge how deficient you are in many good qualities, ſtill more ſhould you affect to think yourſelf quite devoid of merit, you are not truly humble, neither before God nor towards man; you are morally but a moſt imperfect being; yours is but a proud humility.

FINIS.

DEC - 3 1928